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THE FIRE FIEND.

BY DR. C. D. GARDETTE.

Once more the Fire Fiend's direful spite
  Hath wrought foul havoc in our land;
Once more his torch hath flamed by night
So felly that the morning's light
  Hath shone on ruin and on death;
  And all the myriad woes that stand
The ready minions of his train,
  With eager and portentous breath,
Now sound his dreadful triumph strain!

A city smokes and smoulders still
  With the dull embers of his wrath;
But from each valley, plain and hill,
O'er the whole land, the heart and will
  To stay and save are felt and heard;
  And toward the doomed ones every path
Is brimmed with rescue; where the thirst
  Of speed among the glorious herd
Is, who shall reach to succor first!

Ah, this is well! It stirs the heart
  To know that in these hours of need,
The passions and the prides that start
Their poison in men's veins, to smart
  Their souls with bitterness and hate,
  By one such human touch are freed
And scattered; that their currents fill
  With rushing love-tides: this is great;
And man, thank God, is godlike still!

THE FIRE SPREADERS;

OR,

The Burners of Chicago.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE BROKEN HOME," "EDDY'S SEARCH," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," "MARK HEBER'S LUCK," "THE PLOT AGAINST HAWLEY," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNINGS OF A GIANT WICKEDNESS.

The great Northwest was ablaze!

There were fires in Michigan—fires in Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota—fires in Iowa and Nebraska—fires all through the great woods, and over the great prairies.

Villages, four-corners and solitary farmhouses were alike smouldering in a common ruin.

The number of square miles which had been burnt over—the number of families which had been left houseless—the number of lives which had been lost—all these statistics had swelled to a bulk that was appalling.

And still the telegraph was daily flashing throughout the country reports of new fires!

The drouth had long been unexampled. The wells, like the minor streams, were generally dry. The meadows and pastures looked as if seared with a hot iron. The ploughed fields appeared actually baked. The forests were like tinder. The heat was withering. The air was as parched as an ash heap. And men not only talked of the great calamities which had already been endured, but they also talked of still greater ones being possible or impending, as if a vail had been lifted prophetically upon the coming doom of Chicago.

The sultry afternoon of Monday, the 28th of August of the memorable year we have indicated—1871—was drawing to a close, when a man of some three and twenty years might have been seen reclining by the roadside in a lonely section of country upon the west shore of Lake Michigan, about a hundred miles north of Milwaukee, and not far from the village of Berwick.

He was looking intently at a few dollars, mostly in "postage currency," which he had sorted and spread upon the ground beside him.

An expression of the deepest discontent and disgust had clouded his features.

The name of this man was Wall Underbee.

He was a native of the aforesaid village of Berwick, where he had been born in humble circumstances. He had been reared to hard work, but had received a fair education. He had been a mule driver on the tow-path, a bar tender, a farm laborer, a soldier, a clerk in a grocery, and a lumber-man, and had toiled for his bread in various other capacities, the details of which would be useless and tiresome. He had reached man's estate without any especial overt wickedness, but with a nature positively inclined to evil. He was stoutly built, and as nimble as strong. His features were not irregular or unhandsome, but were strongly and sinisterly marked, announcing a mind and heart susceptible only to the most violent passions.

His appearance at the moment was sufficiently striking.

He wore only a shirt and pantaloons, the former begrimed with dirt and sweat, and exhibiting several holes which had been made by fire; the latter scant of pattern and poor in material, besides being greatly the worse for wear. He had a coat and vest, however, which, with his hat, lay upon the ground near him. His hair was uncombed and tangled, and sundry fragments of straw therein suggested that he had been sleeping recently upon an out-door bed of that material. His complexion was nearly as dark as his black eyes, and a flush of deep feeling now rendered it livid. He was, in fact, a prey to a profound agitation.

"And *this* is all I have to show for the last four weeks," said he hoarsely, in a tone of savage impatience, as he ran his glances rapidly over the money. "So much for being honest and good-natured! So much for helping all these people put out their fires! It looks infernally as if I were somebody's fool! In these four weeks I have helped save a dozen dwellings and barns—have been chiefly instrumental in saving the whole village of Berwick, having been the first to discover the flames—and have risked my life again and again as freely as if it were water. And *this* is my reward—the enormous sum of four dollars and twenty-five cents!"

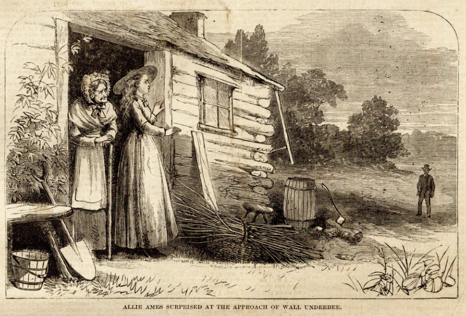
He crushed the money into a heap, and thrust it into his pocket, with a face as black as a thunder-cloud; but suddenly his whole aspect changed—his grim features relaxing, his eyes kindling viciously, and a smile of wolfish satisfaction parting his lips.

"But all these experiences have their uses," he added. "They've given me an idea."

He drew from his pocket a box of matches, to which his gaze turned with the same intentness he had previously bestowed upon his money.

"To think of the power that lies in that little box!" he resumed enthusiastically. "A single one of these matches, could I develop its full powers, would burn up the world! It takes away my breath to realize what great ends I can accomplish with these simple instruments. How they can be made to minister to my ease and luxury! How well they will assist me in the accumulation of money! How perfectly they can be made to wait upon my revenge!"

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



ALLIE AMES SURPRISED AT THE APPROACH OF WALL UNDERBEE.

Returning the box of matches to his pocket, he sprang lightly to his feet, as if about to take refuge from his exciting thoughts in a walk down the road. Before he could move further, however, the sound of approaching footsteps fell upon his hearing, and his gaze soon encountered a begrimed figure, very much like his own, which had come into view around a sharp bend in the road only a few rods distant.

"Is that really you, Tripler?" he saluted, as the new-comer came nearer.

"Yes, Wall, as you see. The surprise is mutual."

The couple shook hands cordially and adjourned to the nearest fence, taking refuge from the fierce rays of the sun in the somewhat scanty shade afforded by a large pine.

The new-comer was named Tripler Shott. He also was a native of Berwick, and as much like Underbee in character and disposition as one pea is like another. They had served in the same company during the war, and had worked side by side in several civil employments. Like Underbee, Shott had the reputation of being "a good worker." Like Underbee, too, Shott was reputed wild and reckless. They were, in fact, a well-matched couple.

"I was afraid I shouldn't see you again very soon," resumed Tripler Shott. "I heard you got a bad burn in putting out old Wigley's barn."

"And so I did," returned Wall Underbee, with a fierce curse, as he exhibited a large scar upon his right shoulder. "The shirt was burned from my back, and a flaming joist which fell upon me and knocked me down did the rest. And what was my reward from old Wigley? A shirt, a mush-and-milk supper, and a two-dollar greenback!"

"Well, that's better than Tad Lawton served me the other day," declared Shott, with a wrathful disgust. "I didn't lose a square foot of cuticle, as you did, but I was at Lawton's nearly all day, and I worked like a slave, carrying out and taking care of his household effects—for we couldn't save his house, you know—and when everything was set to rights, he dismissed me with thanks, and not the least token to remind me that our beloved country has a circulating medium."

"They're all alike," affirmed Underbee bitterly. "Just think how Judge Roper treated me. I fought fire for him three days and nights, helping him save several hundred acres of woodland, and he didn't give me a cent. He seemed to think himself entitled to my services for nothing in such a season of public trial. But this foolishness has ended for me, Tripler. I've put out my last fire. Have you any money?"

"Not a cent," replied Shott.

"Can you get any work to do?"

"Only the work I've been doing—putting out fires for nothing. I've been looking in vain several days for a paying job."

"Well, how long are you going to continue this sort of existence?"

"Not a minute longer. I was just saying to myself as I came along the road, that I'd never put out another fire for anybody."

"Well, would you like to change things?" demanded Underbee, as he turned his eyes full upon his companion, in a long and searching scrutiny. "Are you ready to play a bold game with me for a few weeks, with the certainty of making a fortune?"

Tripler Shott looked straight at Underbee, and his eyes flashed vividly.

"I believe you know who I am," said he quietly. "Let's have your idea."

"For my part," said Underbee, "I've resolved to change my whole life from this hour forward. From being poor and helpless, I am going to become rich and powerful. I must and will have money. I want the power that money alone can bring. I've marched and countermarched at the word of command as long as I'm going to. From this hour forward, Tripler, I shall be my own master. I'm done with slaving on farms and in saw-mills. I'm going to place myself in such a position as to live without work—as to go and come at my own option and pleasure. I'm going to turn upon all my annoyances, upon all my enemies—"

"Your every thought is mine," breathed Shott eagerly. "I'll join you in everything. How is the thing to be accomplished?"

"I'll tell you. Instead of working for others, we must work for ourselves. It's not what you save for others, but what you secure for yourself, that makes your fortune. Instead of putting out fires for Tom, Dick and Harry, we must kindle a few for our own benefit! Instead of being fire extinguishers, *we must be fire spreaders!* Instead of pulling chestnuts out of the fire for others, like the cat in the fable, we must save them for ourselves!"

"That is to say—we must turn incendiaries?"

"Exactly. This season of public distress is our private opportunity. Instead of putting out fires for nothing, we must kindle a few in places where they will pay! A few fires more or less will attract no attention now-a-days. For instance, would Tad Lawton be surprised if his barn should burn this afternoon?"

"No, he wouldn't. He's afraid it *will* burn, his house having set the example. I should say he rather expects the barn to follow the house, sooner or later. You know what the state of public feeling is? Half the men you meet believe—or at least fear—that the world is about to be burned up altogether, in accordance with Scripture. The old parson at Berwick preached a sermon to that effect yesterday."

"Good. I see that you are posted. You realize that we can fire as many buildings as we please without falling under suspicion?"

"Why, of course—in these times, when fires are constantly occurring. A few more or less, as you have suggested, would attract no attention."

"Let's go down to Lawton's," proposed Underbee thoughtfully. "Possibly it might pay. Possibly I may have a chance to preach by example. A minute's action is better than an hour's talking. Come!"

With these words, Underbee leaped to his feet and took his way toward the barn of the aforesaid Lawton, which was in plain sight, scarcely a mile distant, in a retired situation, not far from the edge of a considerable tract of woods.

"All right," said Shott, as he followed his leader. "If no one is around—and we can make anything—I wouldn't mind making Lawton squirm a little. He's treated me shabbily enough."

Not another word was uttered until the couple had gained the edge of the woods adjacent to the barn in question—a large and well-arranged structure, nearly new.

"Lawton is away—in Sheboygan or somewhere," then said Shott. "He's gone to look after his insurance money for his house."

"And his folks?" queried Underbee, a little nervously, as he fumbled his box of matches.

"They're staying at his brother's."

"The coast is clear, then. It's a mile and a half to the brother's. No one is around, as I see."

"Not a soul. Why should there be? Lawton's house stood quite by itself. He owns so many hundreds of acres that no one can crowd him. Stay—there comes young Lawton."

A youth had indeed come suddenly into view from the direction of "the brother's" mentioned, and was making his way toward the barn.

"Ah, yes," whispered Underbee. "We'll watch him. He has come to feed and water the horses in the barn. It's near dark, you see."

The youth gained the barn and entered it, remaining twelve or fifteen minutes. Then he was seen going away, and in a few moments more he had vanished in the direction from which he had come.

"That's all plain English to me," observed Underbee smilingly. "His chores in this quarter are done for the night. We'll take a step or two nearer—in fact, visit the barn. It may be well, under the circumstances. Besides, we must make a beginning somewhere. As well now as a year hence. Come!"

They gained the barn unseen. The doors were found padlocked.

"They're the cheapest and poorest, of course," said Underbee, with a sardonic smile, as he examined the padlocks. "Lawton always saves at the spigot. It would be almost impossible to find a key that wouldn't unlock these things."

The first key he tried of a bunch he possessed did the business.

The two men entered the barn.

"Here are three good horses, as I expected," said Underbee, after looking around a few moments.

"Yes, very good," returned Shott. "That nigh one can trot inside of three minutes. He cost Lawton four hundred dollars."

"Here's a good democrat wagon," continued Underbee. "Here's also a good double harness and a single one."

He took a look out of doors, reflected a moment, and added:

"We'll harness the horses, Tripler."

"Now, while they are eating?"

"Yes, now—before dark. I'm sorry we can't take the wagon, but we can't. It would be a queer fire, you know, that would burn up that wagon so completely that no iron-work could be found in the ashes—no tire, no anything."

"You are determined, then—"

"Well, yes, we may as well make a little raid on Brother Lawton. It'll get our hands in. It'll pay him for not paying you. Help me on with these harnesses."

The horses were soon harnessed, and Underbee then secured a bag of oats, some blankets, etc.

"What next?" asked Shott.

"We'll lock the door and go back to the woods."

They did so immediately.

"We'll wait here until the horses are done eating—until it is dark, in fact," observed Underbee.

The couple accordingly waited, but not long. The shadows of night were soon resting heavily around them.

"We can move now," whispered Underbee.

They crept back to the barn, entered, and brought out the horses.

"Lead them into the woods," said Underbee, "to the turn that takes us to the gully. Wait for me there."

Shott hurried away with the horses, as desired, while Underbee again entered the barn.

"Pity there's nothing else to carry off," he muttered, with a final glance around. "But it's fortunate that there's so much to burn. 'Twill be a rousing old fire. Lawton won't be in the least astonished to find that not the least bone of his horses is left in the ashes."

He moved into the stalls enough loose straw to assure himself that the fire would be especially fierce in that quarter, and then he drew his box of matches from his pocket.

"*Scratch*, and all is done!" he muttered.

The fire kindled, he slipped from the barn, padlocked the door, and hurried away in the direction taken by Shott.

"Where now?" asked the latter, as Underbee joined him.

"We'll ride fifty miles before morning on the main road to Milwaukee," replied Underbee, as he sprang upon one of the horses. "To-morrow we'll lie over in some snug place, and to-morrow night we'll travel the balance of the distance. In Milwaukee we shall have no difficulty in disposing of our stock at reasonable figures to some dealer who'll ship them to Chicago."

This programme being duly carried out, the couple found themselves in possession, toward the close of the third day of our acquaintance with them, of seven hundred and sixty dollars. Going back to Berwick, on a night express, they were "surprised" to hear, on the following morning, that Lawton's barn had gone the way of his house, and that his valuable horses and everything else upon the premises had been consumed in the flames.

"You see how much better it is to be a fire kindler than a fire extinguisher," observed Underbee to Shott, as they walked along a road adjacent to the scene of destruction. "This affair has netted us each more than a hundred dollars a day, and it wasn't much of an opening either. I wouldn't undertake another like it. There's too much risk in it for the money—too much trouble. I burnt Lawton's barn merely by way of a beginning. Don't suppose that I shall look as low again as barn burning. We can do better."

"How?" asked Shott.

"Why, we'll burn houses, stores, and all sorts of buildings wherein lots of nice goods and valuables are lying around loosely. There's that house of Wigley's, for example. Wigley treated me about as meanly as Lawton treated you, Tripler, and yet Wigley is worth a hundred thousand dollars. His plate is real silver, and his desk is lined with greenbacks and government bonds."

"Indeed!" and Shott's eyes glittered. "In this case, I should think it would be well for us—"

"Exactly. Wigley will blaze to-night! We'll start the fire about midnight, when everybody is asleep. As soon as it gets well under way, we'll yell like maniacs to wake up the family—for, of course, we don't want them to perish. The moment they rush out of the house, we'll slip in. I know where the plate is kept, as well as where the old man's desk is situated, and we'll soon put the finishing touches."

The house of Mr. Wigley was burned in accordance with this programme. The booty was not so large as the incendiaries had expected, owing to the fact that Mr. Wigley kept his bonds at his banker's, but they secured over a thousand dollars in money, and a large quantity of plate.

"You see that we are flourishing," said Underbee to Shott, the following morning, after they had paid a visit to the ruins, in common with their neighbors. "These two fires have netted us over two thousand dollars. We'll continue the thing. We'll plunder before burning, and burn to hide the plundering. A good fire, like charity, will cover a multitude of sins."

"Yes, and at this rate we shall soon be able to seek a wider field of operations," said Shott—"in fact, remove to Chicago!"

"Exactly, Tripler. We shall bring up in Chicago in due time. We can do tremendous things in Chicago!"

The next eight days were spent in the nefarious work thus entered upon, and at the end of that time Underbee and Shott were possessed of over five thousand dollars in money, besides considerable silver ware, watches, jewelry, and other valuables.

"The next thing for us is to buy a nice country place—one as retired as possible," said Underbee to his confederate. "We'll buy it where we're not known, and I'll give an assumed name, so that none of our acquaintances will hear of the transaction, or bother us with questions as to where we got the money. We can afford a place worth twelve or fifteen thousand, and can buy it cheap in these times of panic; paying three or four thousand down, and the balance on easy mortgage."

A couple of days sufficed to carry out this project. The couple secured a residence that was handsomely furnished and untenanted, so that they could take possession of it at once.

"All this is glorious," remarked Underbee, after he had strutted up and down the spacious apartments for an hour. "Eh, Tripler?"

"I agree with you—glorious!"

"But, Tripler— There *is* a 'but,' you see."

"What is it?"

"Greed being satisfied, I have a moment in which to think of love. There is a little girl back here in the woods, with whom I have long been desperately smitten. The busy events of the past few days have prevented me from saying anything about her, but I've thought of her daily, and my whole soul is now up in arms to see her again. If you'll keep house in my absence, I'll pay her a visit."

"Go, then. You'd be wiser to keep away from her. It's those girls that bring ruin on everybody and everything, as you'll some day learn. But go. I'll wait for you here."

Underbee smiled his thanks, and soon made an elaborate toilet and took his departure.

CHAPTER II.

FROM GREED TO REVENGE.

A little old log-house stood in the edge of one of those large tracts of woodland for which the Northwest is distinguished.

In the door-way of this wretched shelter stood a little old woman, who was peering out into the shadows that the approach of night, combined with the smoke of great fires, had spread over the forest.

The house and the woman appeared singularly in keeping with each other.

The house had stood in that lonely spot many a long year, and was far advanced in decay. Its walls were full of crannies, its roof of leaks. One whole side of it had settled upon its foundations. The two or three windows were quite small.

The woman was bowed and thin and trembling, looking indeed as if a good wind would blow her away. Her sight had evidently failed her, to judge by the way in which she shaded her eyes with her hand and contracted her brows, as she thus peered into the surrounding woods. Her strength was nearly gone, too, as was shown by her leaning upon a rough staff. Her hair was white and thin, her features wrinkled, and her hands and arms skeleton-like in their gauntness.

"Allie! Allie!" she called, in a shrill, anxious voice. "Where are you, child? Allie! Allie!"

Only a feeble echo responded.

"Strange where that child can be," sighed the old woman. "Perhaps some harm has happened to her. The woods must be full of fire, to judge by the smoke."

She called again, more anxiously than before, but only the same feeble echo answered.

"Curious! Where can she be? What would become of me, if she should be burned in the woods? And what would become of her, if I should be burned alive in her absence?"

These thoughts were so dreadful that the old woman hastened to call again, with the excitement of an anxiety that was now approaching the wildest apprehension.

These repeated calls were answered by a voice from the woods, a voice sweet and clear and bird-like, and trilling with joy and life.

The next moment a girl appeared from the shadow of the woods, and came across the little yard with elastic tread. Her arms were full of willow withes, such as basket makers use. She was clad in cheap cotton garments, and wore stout buttoned boots and a round hat wreathed with wild flowers freshly gathered. The face under the hat was round and fair and sweet, with a sunny brightness upon every feature that betokened a hopeful spirit, a loving nature, and a courageous soul. Her chestnut hair had fallen from its confinement and strayed about her shoulders. Her deep blue eyes were sparkling with life and health.

"Here I am, Auntie," she cried. "I am sorry to have made you anxious."

"It's all right now, dear," said the old woman, taking a seat, and seeming to dismiss all her fears, and even to receive a new lease of life, at sight of that fresh sweet face.

"I've been gone longer than I intended. I saw more smoke than usual down in the hollow, and walked quite a distance in that direction to see if the woods were on fire," explained the young girl.

"And were they?"

"No, Auntie. At least I could see nothing of any fire."

"It's all right now, dear," repeated the old woman, with a sigh of relief. "I got a little wild with thinking what would become of each of us, if anything should happen to the other. How could I live without you, dear? What a good little girl you have been! How hard you have worked making baskets to support us—"

"Tut, tut, Auntie," interrupted the young girl, throwing her arms around the old woman's neck and kissing her tenderly. "You know that I've only done what little I could to repay the great debt I shall always owe you. Have you not always been as good to me as if you were my own mother? Did you not spend upon my education all the five hundred dollars you had saved before your marriage—"

"Hush, now, dear," interrupted the old woman, with moistening eyes. "I can't have you telling what I've done for you. Heaven knows I haven't done a tenth of what I would have liked to do. You were such a dainty little mite when my husband brought you here, that I loved you at sight, and I've loved you more and more every day since. Just now, what with all these fires, and my almost helpless condition, I got a little wild with thinking. Are you sure you could remember all I have told you about yourself, and about myself and my husband, if—if anything were to happen suddenly to me?"

"Oh, yes, Auntie; I shall never forget any of these things," answered Allie. "But you mustn't be nervous and worried. Mr. Withers will be back one of these days, and he may bring you lots of money—"

"I fear I shall never see Jack again, and if I do, I don't care for any money he may bring. What I would like him to do is to tell us who you are, and who your parents are, and how he came by you. Jack was well-nigh twenty years younger than I am, and it would be hard for either of us to tell, I think, how the marriage came about. He was a sailor, and as wild and roving as sailors usually are, but he was as handsome as a picture, and somehow I must have been charmed when he told me, with his bright eyes and earnest voice, that he loved me to distraction and implored me to marry him. It came out afterward, to be sure, that Jack knew of my little savings, and we soon quarrelled about that very matter, for he wanted me to give him all that money, and I wanted to lay it up against a rainy day. But all this is nonsense. It's no matter how I was drawn into a marriage with Jack Withers. Married we were, and for a time I was reasonably happy. We came here and bought this place, and Jack worked at farming one summer, but the old sea fever got hold of him, and nothing would do but his going to sea again. The country all about here was then a howling wilderness, and I didn't like to be left here alone, but what could I do? Jack went away, and was gone a year. When he came back, you were in his arms. That was a little more than fourteen years ago, and you are now seventeen. Jack said at first that you were an orphan, but he soon fell to contradicting himself, for I was sharp with him, and he finally declared that you were named Allie Ames, and that you were a rich man's daughter, and that the rich man had gone travelling and died abroad, after the death of your mother, and that your uncle and aunt wanted you got rid of, so that they could inherit your father's money. Jack said you'd be a prize to us, but I questioned him so closely and reproached him so much, that he went away the very next day after bringing you here; and from that day to this I have never seen or heard anything of him—"

"We'll talk of this presently, Auntie," interrupted Allie, starting suddenly and drawing herself up as if she were contemplating a reptile. "Here comes that odious Wall Underbee."

The person named had indeed entered the premises, and was drawing near with a jaunty and self-satisfied air.

"Good-evening, Miss Ames. Good-evening, Mrs. Withers," said he, in his smoothest voice, as he lifted his hat, and bowed politely from one to the other.

They returned his salutation coldly, and Allie drew herself up, as if about to retire into the house.

"I am patroling the woods near here, to be sure that no fire gets the start of us," continued Underbee, coming nearer, "and so I naturally came this way to see if you are quite safe and well. A warm day we are having, Mrs. Withers, and these terrible fires are making the air still more sultry and oppressive. Might I trouble you, Miss Ames, for a drink of water?"

The girl brought a tumbler of water, which Underbee received with those reiterated thanks and needless apologies characteristic of insincerity.

"I hope you are quite well, Miss Ames?" he said to her, as he gave back the tumbler, and fixed his baleful eyes upon her face in a gaze of lawless admiration.

"I am—thank you."

"Can I not have a few moments conversation with you?"

"Upon what subject, sir?"

"Upon the subject in which I have so often tried to interest you—my love for you."

"No, sir. I do not wish to talk with you upon that subject—or any other," declared Allie firmly. "I have told you again and again that your attentions are in the highest degree obnoxious to me. And I beg of you not to trouble me with your presence again."

"Indeed! Well, the road is open to everybody, I believe—"

"You had better use it then, and immediately!"

The girl turned, with this sharp rejoinder, to enter the house, but Underbee caught her roughly by the arm.

"These fine airs won't go down with me," he said harshly. "You shall hear what I have to say to you. I'm not to be insulted by a little impertinent nobody like you!"

A brief struggle followed—desperate on the part of Allie, determined and pitiless on the part of Underbee.

Two circumstances restrained the girl from calling for assistance.

She was too proud to make such a confession of weakness, and she hadn't the least hope of any one's responding to a call for help, the distance to the nearest neighbor's being nearly two miles, and the lonely road that passed the hut seldom having a traveller upon it.

But help came unexpectedly.

The open space in front of the cabin was suddenly crossed by a swift-moving figure, and Wall Underbee was seized and flung backward several yards in a very unceremonious manner, and a strong arm was thrown around Allie, supporting her tenderly.

"Oh, Paul!" cried the girl, the instant she found herself in that protecting embrace.

The new-comer was the beau ideal of a hero, and he looked doubly himself at that exciting moment, when all the great qualities of his soul seemed called into action. His name was Paul Sidney, and his age about twenty. He was clerk at Palmer's Mill, a large saw-mill upon a considerable stream emptying into Lake Michigan, about three miles from the river's mouth, and the fifty or sixty men employed there were more or less under his superintendence. It is hardly necessary to add that this profitable and commanding situation, for a youth of his years, had not been acquired without its being deserved, and without the possession of the necessary qualities to fill it worthily.

Paul was an orphan. Since his tenth year, every dollar he had handled had been earned by himself. He had attended a common school several winters, and had even spent two terms in a flourishing commercial college of Chicago, enlarging his knowledge and capabilities a great deal, but in the same ratio depleting his hard-earned savings. Still boyish in appearance and in heart, he had the strength and the sense and seriousness of a man.

A few moments were spent by our hero in calming and soothing the fluttering young girl who nestled so confidingly to his heart, and by the end of this time Underbee had gathered himself up awkwardly, and in a state of rage that seemed to threaten a speedy termination in apoplexy.

"Oh, curse you, Paul Sidney!" he hissed furiously, as he concentrated all his forces for a murderous struggle. "I told you, a year ago, when you caused me to be dismissed from Palmer's employment, that if you ever crossed my path again I'd have your life on the spot. And here you are!"

His hand flew to a concealed weapon.

"Hold!" enjoined Paul, in a voice even calmer than it was stern. "Don't draw any weapon upon me, Wall Underbee, or you are a dead man! I carry the tools for just such cowardly wretches as you are, and I know how to use them. Take that hand away from your breast pocket, and keep it away!"

The hand of the would-be assassin dropped to his side, but he only foamed the more by reason of the restraint thus put upon him.

"Oh, you can swagger, Paul Sidney," said he, flourishing his fists. "But if it were not for the presence of a lady, I'd flog you like a dog on the spot—"

"We'll waive the presence of the lady," interrupted Paul, advancing quickly toward his enemy. "She'll neither interfere with my treatment of you, nor be alarmed by it. She'll be pleased, on the contrary, to see you, for once, receiving your just deserts!"

As he spoke, he picked up a large limb of lithe willow—one nearly an inch in diameter—which Allie had just brought in her load of basket materials, and at once began raining a shower of blows with this formidable instrument upon the head and shoulders of Wall Underbee.

It was in vain that the chastised villain sought to avoid the punishment by darting this way and that, by raising his arms defensively, and by seeking to grapple Paul, or to seize his arm. Moving lithely around his patient, and avoiding all the efforts made to return the treatment in kind, our hero continued to belabor the raging villain until the goad was a mere handful of slivers.

"And now you can go," then said Paul, with a farewell kick. "And let me advise you to never visit this place again, or at the least to never again molest this young lady, on pain of a repetition of this punishment. Away with you!"

For one moment Wall Underbee hesitated, standing motionless, with his face streaked and livid, and his whole frame smarting with pain, while he glared from the girl to her protector. A strong temptation was upon him to draw his revolver, and then and there conquer or die. But Wall Underbee was essentially a coward, and to fight an equal or a possible superior was a measure he had carefully avoided from his youth up. He accordingly took the part, as usual, of safety and prudence.

"Very well—I go, sir!" he hissed between his clenched teeth. "But my time will come, Mr. Paul Sidney! I wish you and your fair charge a pleasant evening together."

He stalked away rapidly, as he finished these remarks, and soon vanished from the view of the young couple in the adjacent forest.

"That man is a demon!" murmured Allie, shuddering. "I fear he will do you some terrible injury!"

"He belongs to the barking breed of dogs—except where a young girl like you is concerned. It was high time to check his insolence. He did not hurt you seriously?"

"He almost sprained my wrist, I think. But it will soon be better."

"There have been so many alarms about fire," said Paul, as he again drew the slight figure to his heart, and looked down with wrapt admiration and affection upon the pure sweet face, "that I thought I would slip up here for a few minutes and see if you and Auntie were safe. I arrived in good time, it seems. But what was that villain driving at?"

"He got mad because I ordered him away from the house, and told him I didn't wish him to ever show himself here again. He has long been trying to pay me attention, you know, and the welcome you have received here lately has made him desperate."

"You served him just right," declared Mrs. Withers, appearing in the door-way. "But I'm a nervous old thing, and I couldn't bear to see the fight."

"There was no fight, Auntie," returned Paul lightly, as he pressed the old woman's hand respectfully. "It was merely a slight administering of punishment. How have you been since I was here?"

"All shaken up, my dear boy—all shaken up," replied Mrs. Withers, sinking heavily into a chair just within the door. "All these fires around us are scaring me to death. I don't know what minute the woods will catch."

"You mustn't be alarmed, Auntie," said our hero soothingly. "I'm not far away, you know, and I keep a good look-out in this direction. The woods near you cannot take fire without my knowing it."

"Won't you come in?"

"Thank you—no. Allie has already asked me. I can stay but a few moments. We have to watch night and day at the mill, you know, and there is so much responsibility resting upon me that I do not feel like being long absent from my post."

"Well, some other time then. You know that you are always welcome."

"Thanks. Is there anything I can do for you—anything you want from the village?"

"How good and thoughtful you always are! No, nothing, my dear boy."

"Then I'll say good-night to you, Auntie, and hurry back to the mill, after a few words more with Allie."

He exchanged greetings with Mrs. Withers, and drew Allie a few yards away.

"This affair with Underbee," said he, with deep feeling, "has decided me to say to-night what I had intended to say later. You are very dear to me, Allie—the realization of all my ideal of womanhood—the one little girl I want to be all my own for ever. I love you with all my soul, and shall love you always. Will you not be my own little wife?"

The lithe figure nestled closer within the arm he had thrown around it.

"I will—if you want me!" the sweet voice fluttered, as a pair of bright eyes looked shyly up into his face. "You know that I love you!"

How sweet was that avowal—how joyous that moment!

"You do not, of course, mean an early marriage," added the girl.

"Of course not."

"I am very young."

"And I have my fortune to make before we can marry," avowed Paul gravely. "It's foolish to marry too young, and even wicked to marry before a young man has laid up a snug sum of money. All this is understood between us, of course. But I wanted to know that you love me—".

"Oh, I do, Paul."

"And I wanted the encouragement of knowing that you will be my own little wife when we are old enough to marry, and when I have earned a nice little home to which to take you. And now I want one thing more: I want you and Auntie to come down near the mills to live, where you will be near me, and where you will not be so exposed to danger as you are here in the woods."

The girl reflected a moment.

"There is a nice little cottage to be had near Mrs. Hargate's," added Paul, "and I am sure Auntie will be pleased with the change."

"Yes, she will be," avowed Allie. "She has spoken repeatedly of taking such a step."

"You will move down near the mills, then?"

"Yes, we will. I know Auntie's mind so well that I am sure I can give you this promise."

A thousand tender things were said by the lovers, as they paced slowly to and fro in front of the door, from which Mrs. Withers looked out benignantly and approvingly upon them.

But when Paul's "few moments" had lengthened into hours, and the night had fully set in, he tore himself away with many injunctions for Allie's safety and comfort, and hurried to his post of duty.

His footsteps had scarcely ceased to echo in the forest, when Allie entered the cabin and closed and barred the door.

"Paul told me to be on my guard against Underbee, Auntie," said she, in explanation of this prompt movement.

"That's right, child—that's right."

The evening passed at the little cabin as usual—Mrs. Withers retiring early, and Allie reading her to sleep; after which the young girl withdrew to her own little apartment.

For a long time after going to bed she mused upon the eventful hours preceding, but she finally sank into that sweet and sound slumber which is one of the privileges of youth and health.

The evening had passed away, and the still hour of midnight had arrived, when Wall Underbee slipped noiselessly from the cover of the adjacent woods and drew near the lonely dwelling.

A few moments he listened intently.

"They're asleep," he then muttered.

In the little lean-to or shed at one end of the house was quite a quantity of dry wood, including many shavings and considerable small wood used for kindling.

"The very thing!" he breathed, after looking into the shed and feeling around.

He gathered several handfuls of the more combustible materials against the house, and then drew his box of matches from his pocket.

"*Scratch!* and all is done!" said he to himself softly.

A burst of flames ascended the instant he applied his match to the combustibles, and he lost no time in slipping back to the depths of the woods, where he halted and waited, like a tiger awaiting its prey!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ON THE VERGE.

BY ALICE STARR.

"What! promise to marry you, and then have it boasted all over the hotel that you have conquered the heart of Belle Edgecomb? No, indeed, Mr. Winsted, I don't aspire to that notoriety;" and the girl's beautiful lip curled haughtily.

"But, Belle, I tell you *this* has been no mere flirtation on my part. I love you madly, truly, and if you refuse me I'll—I'll—"

"Do nothing desperate, I hope. Ha, ha! what an actor you would make, Mr. Winsted! Really you have mistaken your calling, and should exchange your lawyer's briefs for the sock and buskin," cried Belle merrily.

"Belle!" and Paul Winsted's voice had a touch of sternness in it, despite his lover-like attitude—"Belle, you are cruel to mock me thus, and crueller still to keep me in suspense. I love you, provoking girl; and now answer me. Will you be my wife?"

"Well, then, my answer is, No, Mr. Winsted, I will *not* consent to marry you. I have heard too much of your manifold flirtations; and even if I loved you, I would not marry a man who is so notorious for his numerous lady-loves, and—for nothing else."

"Ha!" and his face flushed; "then your ideal of a husband is a *hero?*"

"Precisely, Mr. Winsted; but perhaps you do not understand the word as I mean it. *I* do not mean a melo-dramatic braggart, who boasts of what he *has* done and *can* do, but a *man*—honest, upright, noble—doing and daring all things for the right."

"Then, Miss Belle," and Paul Winsted straightened his stalwart form, and spoke in a cool, distant tone, "judging from your present opinion of me, I fear I shall never reach your high standard of perfection. Therefore, as I have heard your answer, I will go. Farewell;" and seizing his hat, he hastily left the room.

But—O, fickle woman!—hardly had the door closed behind his retreating form, when Belle Edgecomb, the haughty, reigning beauty of the hotel, sprang to her feet, crying:

"Mr. Winsted! Paul—I did not— Gracious heaven! what have I done? He is gone—and I— Oh, I have lost him for ever, wicked, hateful girl that I am!" and she sank back upon the sofa with a burst of tears.

"Why, Paul Winsted, you look as glum as a basket of chips. What ails you, man?" cried Phil. Denham, as he encountered the former on the piazza.

"Well, Phil., I own I *am* feeling rather out of sorts. The fact is—between you and me, remember—I've been *jilted.*"

"Whew!" and Phil. gave a low, incredulous whistle. "Paul Winsted the invincible jilted by a mortal woman! What will happen next, I wonder? But come, old fellow, out with it. I'm all curiosity."

"Then, unfortunately for your peace of mind, you'll have to remain in that anxious state, for I assure you I have not the slightest idea of indulging you with a history of my woes;" and despite his own irritation, he laughed at his friend's look of blank disgust.

"What! not even tell me the fair one's name?" exclaimed Phil. at last, with some indignation.

"No, sir, not even the lady's name."

"Well, then," continued the irrepressible Phil., after a moment's pause, "if you won't take a fellow into your confidence, perhaps your august highness *will* condescend to go a fishing. What say?"

"Say! why, I say I'm with you, and the sooner we start the better. 'Twill 'drive dull care away,' at all events; and besides, I know of a lovely, quiet little spot a short distance below the falls, where we can spend a pleasant morning, I think."

"All right," replied Phil.; "get on your fishing rig, and I'll attend to the tackle. Hurry, for it is getting rather late, and we shall not, as it is, reach our fishing ground for more than an hour."

"Well, Paul, what success?" interrogated Phil., as he joined his friend two hours later. "Have you caught anything? I think the evil one must have tempted me to try my luck around the bend, for I have not had as much as a solitary nibble since I left you. Perhaps the fishes were scared at the reflection of my lovely face in the water; but *n'importe*, here I am, as well off as I started. Why, what under the sun, or rather up the river, are you staring at?" he cried in amazement, as his friend neither turned his head, nor gave the slightest indication of having heard him, but remained fixedly gazing toward a small picturesque island above the falls.

Receiving no reply, Phil. also glanced in that direction, then stood petrified, it seemed, watching as eagerly as did his companion the sight before them.

As we have said, a small green island lay out in the river some distance above the falls, and perhaps twenty yards from the shore, but it was at the river's shallowest point, and a slight bridge spanned it from shore to island.

About midway upon this frail bridge a young girl stood, irresolute whether to advance or retreat, while the bridge bent and swayed dangerously even beneath her light weight.

That the bridge would part was but too evident to the two horrified watchers, who held their breath as they gazed, as if that act would help sustain the bending timbers.

"Phil.!" exclaimed Paul at last, with almost a gasp, "do you know who that lady is?"

"Indeed no," replied Phil., not removing his eyes from the imperilled girl; "how should I? It's too far off for me to recognize her, even if she were my own sister; but I tell you what, old fellow, she's in a mighty ticklish position. I expect every moment that the bridge will break, and then she is lost. Heavens! how it leans! Why don't she go back? Ah! she cannot; it is too late."

"My God!" burst from the ashen lips of Paul Winsted.

The bridge had parted, precipitating its fair burden into the water; and simultaneously with Paul's horrified ejaculation a faint scream reached their ears, as the lady was swept along by the resistless tide.

She was now lost to the sight of the young men, but they knew all too well that the river was sweeping her swiftly toward the falls above them, and Paul groaned and wrung his hands in despair; but only for a moment. Then his dark eyes flashed, and he began hastily to doff fishing basket, coat, hat, and all other incumbrances. His companion gazed at him in dumb amazement, but as he started as if to rush from the spot, Phil. caught and held him back, exclaiming:

"For heaven's sake, Paul, what wild idea has entered your head? Surely you would not be so mad as to brave the power of the falls? It is certain death."

"Hands off!" shouted Paul excitedly, attempting to fling off the detaining grasp. "That lady is Belle Edgecomb. I recognize her bright scarf. I love her, and will save her, or die with her. Even death were sweet, if shared by her. Hands off, I say!"

"You cannot save her; it is impossible. Would it were otherwise. But this is madness, Paul. I cannot let you rush to certain death," pleaded Phil., still holding him back.

"I *will* go. It is *not* madness, for I know a pass through the rocks to the very verge of the falls. But even if it were death, I would go all the same. Let me go, I say;" and with the strength of madness he flung his friend violently from him, and darted away.

With what anxiety did Phil. watch the gleaming falls! Each moment seemed an age.

"Ha!" cried he at length. "Surely something moved up among the rocks near the edge of the great cataract! Again! It is—yes, it is Paul!"

How he got there Phil. did not pause to wonder; enough for him that he *was* there, and, so far, safe. And he watched him with all-absorbing interest as he drew himself up, and, standing full head and shoulders above the level of the falls, gazed eagerly up the river.

Presently Phil. started again, and, his eyes still riveted upon his friend, exclaimed:

"Ha! she must be close by, for Paul leans far out over the rock, and I thought I saw a white hand raised above the water. Yes, I was right, for now he stretches out his arm as if to grasp something; and now—yes, *now* I certainly see the glimmer of a white dress; but it is on the very brink of the falls. Oh! God grant she may not be swept beyond his reach."

But no; even as he spoke, Paul had leaned far over the water, and stretching out his arm to its utmost length, grasped the almost lifeless form of Belle Edgecomb just as she was about being swept over the falls—grasped her and drew her safely to the rock beside him, murmuring thankfully:

"Saved! Thank God, my darling is saved!"

And below the falls Phil. Denham was unconsciously echoing his friend's words:

"Saved! Thank God, saved! on the very verge of an awful death!"

Then joyfully gathering up the fishing tackle, he started to the assistance of his friend, who, after having with much difficulty landed his senseless burden safely on the river's bank, was well-nigh exhausted, and was glad to avail himself of Phil.'s proffered assistance to convey his rescued treasure to the hotel.

"I sent for you, Mr. Winsted, to express my thanks for the inestimable service you rendered me yesterday," said Belle Edgecomb to Paul, whom she had summoned to her presence.

"Do not mention my slight service, Miss Belle. I assure you it was nothing."

"Nothing! And is the saving of a life nothing? *My* life too, Mr. Winstead?" asked Belle poutingly.

"You know I did not mean that; you know that, above all things, I prize as most precious *your* life and happiness, Miss Belle, although it is true I have no right to speak thus, for some luckier man than I will wear the flower I once so daringly hoped to win. But enough of this. I meant, Miss Belle, that the deed was no more than any man would have done, especially *one who loves;*" and he looked at her meaningly.

She blushed consciously, but replied bravely:

"Pray don't make light of it, Mr. Winsted, for it was a most heroic deed, one not often paralleled. I know all about it. There, don't start. Your friend Phil. Denham has told me the whole story."

"How *dare* he?" burst from Paul, in his indignation.

"Dare! Why, it strikes me *I* was one of the principal persons interested, Mr. Winsted, and surely I had a right to make a few inquiries;" and she arched her eyebrows prettily as she spoke.

"Oh, certainly, if you desired," stammered Paul somewhat confusedly. "But I had almost neglected to state that I leave here to-night. Miss Belle, will you bid me farewell?" and he extended his hand.

She started when he announced his intended departure, and flushed deeply, but said softly:

"No."

"As you like," replied Paul, hurt at her apparent indifference. "Farewell." And he turned to leave her presence; but she sprang after him, and catching his sleeve, whispered:

"What if *I* don't want you to go, Paul?"

"Belle," he cried, his face paling with a sudden revulsion of feeling—"Belle, what do you mean?"

"I mean," and she smiled amid her blushes, "I mean that I want you to stay with *me*, Paul." The last words were uttered coaxingly.

"My darling," he murmured, as he clasped her to his heart; "then you do love me, even if I am *not* a hero?"

"Ah, I was only teasing you, dear Paul. I did not mean what I said, for you are my hero, and—and—I think I have loved you all the time;" and she buried her blushing face on his breast.

"My darling!" and he raised her head and pressed a warm kiss on her red lips. "How I bless that treacherous bridge that has given you to my arms at last, my beautiful! my own!"

"GOD SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH."

The devout supplication which terminates the Executive Proclamations of Massachusetts had its origin in the old loyalty which had the British king for its object. In the olden time all proclamations issued by the Colonial governors closed with the usual prayer for the safety of the king. One of the earliest proclamations for Thanksgiving issued in Massachusetts was that put forth by Governor Phipps, in 1752, then "Commander-in-chief in and over His Majesty's Province of Massachusetts Bay, in New England." After a long and devout urging of the people to join in supplication and praise to God, the Proclamation closes with the inevitable—"GOD SAVE THE KING."

After allegiance to Great Britain had been thrown off, and the people had met and designated by freemen's votes who should be their rulers, Governor Hancock was called upon to issue a Proclamation for Thanksgiving, and when he came to the end of the manifesto he retained the spirit of the prayer with a new and grand significance. He dropped the long-used object of royalty, and wrote, in his bold, emphatic characters,—"GOD SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS!" Where is the child of the old Bay State whose heart does not thrill with the sound of the invocation! C.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A SHAKESPEARIAN was reading "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to the sailors of a ship on which he was crossing the Atlantic, and they listened with pleasure till he came to the passage which describes "a mermaid sitting on a dolphin's back," when an old salt burst out, "That's nonsense! A dolphin's back is as sharp as a razor, and no mermaid could ride one till she'd saddled him."

As an early morning train stopped at a station on the Harlem Railroad, an old gentleman with a cheerful countenance stepped out on the platform, and inhaling the fresh air, enthusiastically exclaimed, "Isn't this invigorating?" "No, sir; it is Fordham," replied the conscientious brakeman. The cheerful old gentleman went back to his seat in the car.

"YOU are the dullest boy I ever saw," crossly exclaimed a bald-headed old uncle to his nephew. "Well, uncle," replied the youth, with a glance at the old gentleman's bald head, "you can't expect me to understand things as quickly as you do, because you don't have the trouble of 'getting 'em through your hair.'"

A CLERGYMAN in a strange parish wishing to know what the people thought of his preaching, "interviewed" the sexton, and asked him what the people said of Mr. Jones, his predecessor. "O," replied the sexton, "they say he isn't sound." "Well, what do they say of the new minister." "O, they say he's all sound."

A STINGY man, who pretended to be very fond of his horse, but kept him nearly starved, said to a friend, "You don't know how much we all think of that horse. I shall have him stuffed, so as to preserve him, when he dies." "You'd better stuff him now," retorted the friend, "so as to preserve him living."

"YOU should live within your income, sir," said a harsh old capitalist to a clerk who asked for an advance of wages. "It's easy enough to live within an income," modestly replied the clerk, "but what I should like to know is, how a fellow is to live without one."

JOHN B. GOUGH, in a recent lecture at Boston, said he was one of those who was opposed to the introduction of temperance in politics. And yet Mr. Gough would be puzzled to find anything to exceed the intemperate style of politics of to-day.

AN old lady hearing that the shocking condition of the firemen's hose had resulted in the destruction of a large amount of property, sat up nearly all night to put her husband's socks in complete repair.

"THERE's one thing," said a gentleman at a race, that nobody can beat, and that is *time.*" "Fudge!" exclaimed a bystander, "every drummer in the land beats time!"

"THAT policeman has a fine pair of tights over there, hasn't he?" "How so?" "Why, don't you see those two *tight* fellows that he's taking to the station-house?"

HOUSEKEEPER—to a handsome girl who responded to an advertisement for a plain cook—"You won't do. You're too pretty ever to be a good *plain* cook!"

A SCHOOL-BOY having helped a fellow-pupil in his arithmetic, the teacher angrily asked, "Why did you work his lesson?" "To lessen his work," replied the boy.

SOME people, like barbers, are always ready to scrape an acquaintance, and then, also like barbers, they are apt to cut him, too.

"JOHN, what fruit do you resemble when you are riding a donkey?" "I don't know; what is it?" "A pear," (pair.)

A CORRESPONDENT wants some one to tell him who Richard the Third was before he was "himself again."

"To me," said Aunt Deborah, "the *inside* of things is unintelligible, because I never can make it *out.*"

IN conversation a wise man may be at a loss where to begin, but a fool never knows where to stop.

A LAWYER is like a sawyer in this: Whichever way he turns, down must come the dust.

WHEN is a ship like a scarf-pin? When it is on the bosom of a heavy swell.

A SHOE-DEALER in Broadway advertises "Woman's Rights—and Lefts!"

CURRENT ITEMS.

A PANTHER having killed several sheep and calves in a settlement in Western Missouri, a number of boys organized a hunting expedition to kill the animal. With the aid of dogs they tracked him into the forest, and finally found him crouched on the limb of a tree. One of the boys fired at and wounded him, but not severely, and the panther, giving a fierce yell, sprang at his assailant. But the boys and dogs were all full of fight, and the panther was speedily killed, before he had an opportunity to do any harm.

A LITTLE girl, seven years old, living in Philadelphia, was left by her mother-in-law in charge of a babe, five months old, and the baby being taken in a fit, the little girl was so frightened that she ran into the street, screaming at the top of her voice. A crowd was soon collected, among whom was a physician, who, on learning what was the matter, kindly attended to the babe, and soothed its frightened little attendant into serenity.

AN American gentleman was recently arrested in Naples for killing the Count di Parma in a duel several months ago. The Count was the aggressor; the American tried to avoid the duel, but finally fought and made short work of his antagonist. It is asserted that no Italian jury could be found who would convict a man for killing another in a duel, and that our countryman is sure to be acquitted.

A SCHOONER was driven from its moorings, and its cable broke, in the North River, a few evenings ago, having on board nobody but the captain's daughter, a girl only sixteen years old. She was equal to the occasion, however, and taking the helm, kept the schooner safe on her course, and brought her to under the lee of Staten Island, whence the vessel was worked back to her anchorage.

AN ox belonging to an Iowa farmer broke into the field of a neighbor. The owner of the ox went in after him, and the neighbor at the same time went to drive the animal out. The two men met, unfriendly words were exchanged, and finally they got into a fight, which resulted in the serious injury of both parties, one of whom lost an eye.

THE stockholders of the great insurance companies in Hartford are rather discouraged since the Boston fire, and the Hartford papers are discussing the desirableness and discretion of turning some of the capital now invested in insurance into channels which do not involve so much risk.

A CHILD in Springfield having died from a dose of paregoric, it was subsequently ascertained that the preparation contained too much opium. The fact being brought home to the druggist who sold it, he weepingly confessed that he was not an apothecary, and not qualified to put up prescriptions.

A BOY fifteen years old was fatally wounded by the accidental discharge of a gun, while he was hunting near Orange, N. J., on Thursday of last week. The shot entered his thigh, and severed the femoral artery. The boy lived only about fifteen minutes after the artery was severed.

HEAVY and destructive gales prevailed last week on the British coast. Many valuable vessels were wrecked, and over fifty lives were lost. Similar storms also devastated the coasts of Denmark, wrecking scores of vessels and destroying eighty lives.

A YOUNG man in Alabama having refused to marry a girl to whom he had been for some time engaged, the brother of the young lady challenged him, a duel was fought, and both of the combatants were mortally wounded.

A BOSTON merchant who lost over one hundred thousand dollars by the great conflagration, and is now doing business in a shed, ordered a man out of his establishment, the other afternoon, for whining about the fire.

TWO women of Pekin, Ill., recently beat a young lady teacher of that place in the most brutal manner, because she had mildly punished an unruly son of one of them.

TOO BAD.—The ramparts of Quebec, which constitute the most picturesque feature in America, of any city, are to be destroyed, according to Canadian authority.

A WIDOW lady living at Whitefield, Me., was burnt to death, a few days ago, her clothes having taken fire from an exploded kerosene lamp.

THE explosion of a kerosene lamp the other day in Danville, Penn., caused the loss of two houses and one man's life.

THE rinderpest has at last reached Japan, and is making terrible ravages among the cattle in that island.

'TIS WELL.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

A far-off music faded into air,
  A half-formed vision mocked me for an hour,
Came to me for a moment fragrance rare,
  As of some heavenly flower.

'Tis well the music came not nearer still;
  'Tis well the vision died ere fully born;
'Tis well the perfume faded into air
  Ere I clasped to my heart the rose's thorn;

'Tis well you are not sweeter than you are;
  'Tis well no closer to my heart you grew;
Better to lose a joy just seen afar,
  Than, having had, lose you.

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LI.

THE ESCAPE.

Upon that eventful Saturday night, while Darrel Moer and Grimrod, the movements of the latter unknown to the former, were speeding toward the Cypresses, with the fell purpose of murder in their hearts, a great and unaccountable dread settled down like a dense black pall upon the soul of young Honor Glint. She grew uneasy even before the night fell. A vague depression, such as often warns sensitive people of an impending peril, seized upon her, deepening into a terrible foreboding, and that pall-like dread and gloom which no reasoning could dispel.

Miss Bing brought up a fresh supply of coal, fresh candles, and a tray of food, about dusk, although day and night were nearly the same to the young prisoner in her darkened chamber. The woman returned to her kitchen, and Honor drank her tea and ate her dry toast, and paced her floor restlessly.

Miss Bing came up a little later for the tray, and did not fail to mark the uneasiness of her captive.

"Somehow you seem to feel your imprisonment most, Miss, just as it is about to end," said the spinster familiarly. "I shall set you free on Monday, and yet you look more down-hearted like than at any time since you came here."

"Are you sure that Darrel Moer will release me on Monday?" asked the young girl abruptly.

"Of course I'm sure. Why should he detain you here, when your release cannot injure him? His first wife is dead, and if he married Miss Floyd to-day his last marriage is legal. He will want you to promise that he shall not be troubled for imprisoning you, and he will write me to exact such a promise, and to let you go. He won't leave his new bride to come here, you may be sure. He has no longer any fear of you, Miss. So you're certain to be free on Monday."

"Let me go to-night," cried the girl, in eager pleading. "I will make you a promise that I will never seek to harm Darrel Moer. I have money in my pocket. I'll give you fifty pounds to release me to night."

The woman was visibly tempted, but she resisted the temptation, shaking her head in the negative.

"I'll tell Mr. Moer of your offer, and he'll make up the sum to me. No, Miss, there's no use in talking. Here you are, and here you'll stay till I have orders to release you. I shouldn't dare to do anything without orders, seeing that Watson would never forgive me if anything went wrong. I must go down stairs now. Where is your knife I brought up on the tray? Oh, I see it now. I have to look sharp for the knives since that breakfast knife disappeared from your tray the other morning. Perhaps I forgot to bring one up stairs," the woman muttered, speaking more to herself than to Honor. "I'll take a fresh look in the pantry."

She gathered up the tray and departed, locking the door behind her.

Honor was left in the grim solitude, which was peopled only by the shapeless terrors crowding upon her. For hours she walked the floor or sat before her fire, but she felt no disposition to sleep, and made no movement toward retiring.

Miss Bing heaped high her kitchen fire-place and took possession of one of the high-backed settles, and dozed in the warmth and firelight.

About half-past nine o'clock, the ring of a horse's hoofs was heard on the paved way leading from the high-road to the lonely old house, and a horse was ridden sharply around to the rear hall door, and a thunderous rap was given upon the old brass knocker.

Miss Bing sprang up wide awake, and went to the door. She opened it cautiously and peered out.

The night was not dark, nor was it very light. The stars were shining, and objects could be distinctly seen at the distance of several rods. Miss Bing beheld upon her door-step a tall, half-grown lad, whose bridle rein hung over his arm

"What's wanted?" she demanded sharply.

"Is this the Cypresses?" asked the lad.

Miss Bing replied in the affirmative.

"Here's a telegram for Miss Bing, at the Cypresses," said the messenger.

Miss Bing held out her long bony arm for the envelope, received it, bade the messenger wait a moment, as she might require to send an answer by him, and closed and locked the door in his face, hurrying into the kitchen.

She read her telegram by the firelight.

It was from Darrel Moer, dated at London, and contained only these words:

"Am on my way to see you. Don't discharge that person upon any account, nor for any consideration whatever."

Miss Bing puzzled over this message a few moments, then remembering the lad on the steps, she produced a shilling from her pocket, and cautiously reopening the rear door, bestowed upon him the gratuity, and told him that no answer was required. He leaped into his saddle and rode away, and the woman again secured her door.

"There's something mysterious about this message," the woman thought. "Something is in the wind. It's plain Mr. Moer got uneasy, and was afraid I'd let the young lady go. But why should he come here? I can't understand the matter. I'll go up and talk it over with Miss Glint."

She mounted the stairs and admitted herself into Honor's room. The girl was walking still across the floor, but paused as the jailer entered, a faint ray of hope brightening Honor's young face.

"Have you thought over my offer, Miss Bing?" she asked. "And are you come to tell me that you will release me?"

"No, I haven't come for that purpose," said the woman. "I have just received a telegram. Perhaps you heard the messenger's horse, Miss?"

"I heard a horse, but believed that the farmer might have called to bring you the provisions you ordered to-day."

"They came long ago. The horseman was a messenger from Somersham with a telegram from Mr. Moer. He's on his way here. He'll be here to-night."

"What for?"

"That is what I cannot guess. I wrote to him that the doctor's assistant had carried away the dead body of Mrs. Moer, so he's not coming to see her. His visit concerns you. He says I am not to release you 'upon any account, nor for any consideration whatever.' Can it be that he is taking this journey merely to exact a promise from you which I could exact just as well as he?" demanded Miss Bing. "Perhaps," she added, with a sudden idea, "he has slipped up in his marriage with Miss Floyd, and he's coming back to you?"

Honor shuddered. She knew that Darrel Moer had loved her as much as he was capable of loving any one, and the idea seemed to her not unlikely.

"But I am not his wife," she said, "and I will not marry him. If he comes to-night, I will not see him."

"He is master in this house," said Miss Bing coolly. "I advise you to be ready to receive his visit. I must go now to prepare his supper. I have told you of Mr. Moer's coming, so that you will not retire. It is fortunate I did not release you."

She retired abruptly, securing the door behind her.

Honor's first act, after the woman's withdrawal, was to push her bedstead against the door leading into the hall, and to wheel her chest of drawers against the door giving into Miss Bing's room. Thus barricaded, she felt more secure.

"I believe I comprehend the reason of his coming," the young girl thought. "Miss Floyd has refused to marry him, and his old fancy for me has revived. I understand now why I feel so strangely to-night. Darrel Moer thinks that he can force me to become his wife. But I will not be here to meet him," she said to herself, her dusky eyes flashing. "My only safety is in flight. He is utterly without honor or principle. I dare not meet him. I will risk everything—death even—rather than remain here in a trap helpless, like some snared bird. But can I escape?"

The key-holes of both the doors were covered by her barricades. She pushed her small table under the window, and then stole to the hearth, pushed aside the fender, and with her slender fingers pried up two of the bricks forming the hearth.

In a little cavity beneath these bricks was hidden the breakfast knife whose loss Miss Bing had remarked. Honor took it out. It had been worn and ground to a point, and had been as keen as a dagger. The blade, however, was broken now, and the keen edge was indented and broken, showing that it had been subjected to severe use.

Honor seized this implement and mounted her table before the window. The nails and spikes which fastened down the window had been loosened by the toil of days and nights, and Honor drew them out readily. She had taken them out before many times, for she had not tamely submitted to her captivity, and had not ceased to plan an escape from the hour in which she had come to the Cypresses.

During the first fortnight of her imprisonment she had found no opportunity of secreting a table knife, for Miss Bing had searched the tray on every occasion, and Honor dared not place the woman on her guard by allowing her to suspect her plans. There was nothing in the room that could serve the girl's purpose, and one morning, waxing bolder and more desperate, she had pried up the bricks in the hearth, and had hidden her table knife under them. Miss Bing had missed it, had made inquiries, to which Honor returned no answer, had searched the room thoroughly, and had come to the conclusion that she must have omitted, by some strange oversight, to bring a knife upon this occasion. She was more watchful thereafter even than before, yet Honor had found many hours in which to toil for her freedom.

She pushed up the lower sash, and examined the fastenings upon the shutters—a hasp, staple and padlock. She had cut the wood nearly away around the heel of the hasp, and fifteen minutes' work would suffice to enable her to open the heavy wooden shutters. She set to work resolutely, with all her strength concentrated in her slender wrists and hands. She toiled as a man toils for his life. But fifteen minutes had never seemed so long to her before, nor had she ever crowded so much of work and anxiety into a similar space of time.

She paused often to listen. The dulled knife slipped, and frequently refused to penetrate the wood. But the girl's heart did not falter, and at last she achieved her triumph. The hasp and padlock hung loosely on one of the shutters, and both would open at her touch.

She swung them wide, and leaned out of the window, and looked at earth and sky. How glorious were the stars, the fresh breezes, the waving of the trees! She did not heed the noxious air that came up from the reeking fens, but exulted in the strange delight of her partial freedom.

As soon as the first intoxication of her joy had passed, and her ecstatic eyes had grown calm, and her resolute will had stilled her throbbing pulses, she crept down from her perch, and prepared for her descent.

She had a small pair of toy scissors which she had used in sewing, and with these she divided the hems of her sheets, softly tearing the wide linen into heavy strips. Then with difficulty she cut up the thick woolen blankets, tying all her strips into one continuous rope.

"I can't make it reach from the bedstead to the ground," she thought. "I shall have to drag the bedstead to the window. How the time is passing! Darrel Moer must soon be here. And Miss Bing is likely to come up at any moment to see if I have gone to bed. I begin to fear that I shall not escape."

She pushed the bedstead under the window, exerting all her strength, and panting heavily, stopping frequently to rest and listen. No sounds yet of Miss Bing. She trembled with anxiety lest her jailer should hear the rumbling of the bedstead, and she looked in vain for some further barrier to place against the door.

"She creeps up stairs like a cat when she comes," murmured Honor. "She may be at the door now. She is likely to pounce upon me at any moment."

The fear spurred her to even greater quickness.

She secured one end of the rope she had made to the bedstead, and dropped the other out of the window. It fell within three feet of the ground.

"That will do," she said aloud, with a breath of relief. "And now I must attempt my flight."

She put on her sacque hastily, her hat and fur tippet, and climbed over the bed upon the high window sill. Without a moment's hesitation, she grasped the frail rope and swung herself clear of the house. She slipped slowly downward, the rope swaying dangerously, and her hands catching upon the thick knots and tearing the tender skin, but she reached the end safely and dropped noiselessly upon the ground.

She was up again in an instant, with a great terror lest Miss Bing had been lurking under her window to capture her, or lest Darrel Moer might chance to be in sight. But her jailer was back in the kitchen, busily preparing a supper for her expected visitor, and had not heard her movements, and Darrel Moer was miles away.

Honor looked about her with wild eyes, and then, as a consciousness that she was indeed free burst fully upon her, she upraised her eyes with a prayer of gratitude to Heaven, and then sped like an arrow from the bow across the cypress-shaded lawn to the paved road, and along this to the highway.

As she opened the big five-barred gate, and stood upon the high road, she paused a moment, uncertain which way to go.

"I must get to Somersham station," she thought. "Which way shall I take? I've not much time to deliberate. I'll turn to the right."

She did so, setting out at a rapid walk, and keeping a look-out before and behind her.

The night was pleasant, but the air was chilly and keen, with a breath of winter in it. The stars, it seemed to Honor, who had not seen them for so long, were brighter than ever she had seen them. They brought back to her with singular vividness the soft, still nights she had passed upon the Mediterranean, with a blue sky full of golden stars bending above her. With a half sob, as thoughts of Sir Hugh Tregaron, and her friends in London and Captain Glint, surged upon her mind, she quickened her pace to a run.

A few minutes brought her within sight of the farmer's cottage. It was wrapped in darkness. Honor was tempted to rouse up the farmer, tell him her story, and offer him money to convey her to Somersham station, but a sense of caution restrained her. She reflected that she did not know what Miss Bing might have told him concerning her. He might suppose her—Honor—to be Darrel Moer's wife; he might think her mad.

"No, no; it is not safe," she said. "I am free now, and I cannot be too guarded. In any case, if I were to tell the farmer my story, he might wish to see Miss Bing and confront me with her. I am safer as I am. I can walk the dozen miles before morning."

She passed the cottage and hurried on.

The road was narrow and ill-paved, and was bordered with deep ditches. Beyond the ditches, in many places, and bordering the fields, were thickets of alder and other bushes. The fields were mere stretches of fen; some drained, some covered with stagnant water and swamp vegetation, the home of vast numbers of water-fowl.

Honor's progress was necessarily slow, after settling into a steady gait. She had gone some three miles when she heard the rattling of a wagon, rapidly driven, approaching her from the direction in which she was going.

"It may be—it must be Darrel Moer!" she thought.

She sprang over the roadside ditch and hid herself in a thicket of alders.

Some two minutes thereafter, a dog-cart, drawn by a powerful, fleet horse, came rattling around a curve in the road and passed her. The vehicle had but a single occupant.

That occupant was Darrel Moer.

She recognized the dark, mustached face with a thrill of terror, and dared not stir from her concealment until he was well out of sight. She trembled, and was strengthless. Her very breath was hushed.

"He has come from Somersham station," she said, as soon as she could command her thoughts. "I am upon the right road."

She was about to arise and resume her wearisome flight, when a second clatter of hoofs upon the paved road beyond the curve made her shrink back in her concealment.

A horseman came riding past at a good pace, from the direction in which Moer had come, and followed the direction in which Moer was going. No thought of appeal to this rider entered Honor's mind. He looked so dark and fierce and terrible that she felt an instinctive horror of him, and hid herself yet deeper from his sight. The horseman was Grimrod.

When he had passed on out of her sight, the girl crept out from the friendly thicket, and fled along the lonely road, in the chilly night, through the gloomy fens, as if the pursuers had been at her heels. She knew that it was only a question of minutes, and that Darrel Moer would soon be on her track.

CHAPTER LII.

THE PURSUIT.

Darrel Moer drove rapidly onward toward the Cypresses, not dreaming that Grimrod was behind him, or that he had passed the object of his journey by the road-side. Not a gleam of relenting came to his dark soul. He meant to sweep Honor Glint aside, as he would have swept away any insignificant obstacle from his path. The dread deed he meditated did not appall him. His descent upon the road to ruin had been so rapid of late, that he had not paused to mark the stations: from petty vices to bigger ones, and then to crimes such as that against his young wife Carmine, and through the villanies we have depicted, and now he contemplated murder.

He was not many minutes in traversing the distance that separated him from the Cypresses, after passing Honor, and he drew up at the five-barred gate, leaped out, opened it, remounted his dog-cart, and drove up to the house, passing around toward the stable yard.

On turning the angle of the dwelling, he beheld Honor's manufactured rope swinging from her window. He looked up at the open blinds with a great yell, and dashed around to the rear door, sounding such a peal upon the knocker as waked every echo in the house.

Miss Bing came running to the door in affright. She undid the fastenings, and Moer burst in the door while the chain was yet in her hands. He looked like a maniac.

"The girl! the girl!" he gasped, glaring at her with lurid, bloodshot eyes. "Where is she?"

"She's up stairs, sir. Lor', you do give me such a turn. She's up in her room, sir—"

"The same room that she had when I was here?"

"The very same, sir—"

"Come out here. I have something to show you."

Moer seized the woman's arm and half dragged her around the house, pausing under Honor's window. At sight of the swinging rope, Miss Bing uttered a shriek that pealed far out upon the fens.

"She's escaped!" she cried. "She was in her room two hours ago. I told her you were coming. She's not been long gone."

She tore herself loose from Moer's grasp and started away, entering the house and ascending to Honor's room. She looked out at Moer from Honor's open window with groans of despair.

"It's not my fault," she bewailed. "I've guarded her like the crown jewels, that I have. Here's the knife I missed. Oh, Mr. Moer, she's somewhere on the road. Did you see nothing of her?"

"Nothing!" cried Moer. "Yet she must have taken the road to Somersham station. She expected me to-night? She must have heard my wagon approach, and have hidden herself in some way-side thicket. I'll overtake her yet."

He hurried back to his dog-cart, leaped in, seized the reins, and drove away furiously. Miss Bing called to him frantically, telling him that Miss Glint did not know the way to Somersham, and that she was likely to have gone in the wrong direction, but her words fell on empty air. Moer neither heard nor heeded them. He drove out of the grounds, and lashed his horse along the public road, his glaring eyes roving from one side of the road to the other, his brain in a tumult.

At the distance of half a mile from the Cypresses he met Grimrod. The latter could not turn back at his approach, although he recognized the dog-cart afar off, and met Moer with a cool audacity, raising his hat to him.

Moer's rage for an instant gave place to amazement.

"Grimrod! You here!" he ejaculated.

"Yes," said the manager jauntily. "I came up on the same train with you. Why don't you go on to the Cypresses? Have you backed out of your undertaking? Are you going to let this puny girl oust you from one of the finest estates in England?"

"No, no; curse her! no! She's escaped—not an hour ago; she's on the road somewhere. She's on her way to Somersham. We've passed her."

Grimrod uttered an oath at which a demon might have shuddered, and wheeled his horse and sped away in the direction he had come like a whirlwind.

Darrel Moer drove after him at full speed.

The two scanned the bushes with keen glances as they sped; but they knew that their quarry must be further on, and did not linger on the road.

"We shall find her some three, four, or five miles ahead," thought Grimrod, spurring on his steed. "A delicate girl like that would be all night walking to Somersham."

Some two miles on his return road from the Cypresses, Grimrod encountered a belated farmer returning homeward by the lonely and seldom used road past the "haunted house." The manager accosted him, inquiring if he had seen a young girl upon the road afoot and alone.

"I met her three miles back," replied the farmer. "She asked me if this wor the road to Somersham, and I told her it wor, especially if she took the right turns. She wor in a desprit hurry as ever I see—"

Grimrod was away like a flash.

The farmer looked after him a little bewildered, and drove on. He presently encountered Darrel Moer in his dog-cart, and was asked the same question, and made the same answer as to Grimrod.

Moer passed him swiftly on hearing what he had to say, and continued the swift pursuit.

Meanwhile, after passing the farmer who had informed her enemies a little later, Honor Glint began to find her strength failing. She had a pain in her side, her breath came gaspingly, and her steps were tottering. The old adage, "It is the pace that kills," was exemplified in her case. She had travelled five miles, and her necessity for rest was imperative. She had not been able to conceal herself from the farmer, he having come upon her abruptly from behind a curve, but, after asking him her way, she had entreated him not to inform her pursuers of her course. This he had done, and she had experienced a conviction that he would do so. It is not a common thing for a young and beautiful girl to be flying along a lonely and uninhabited road by night without an escort, and the farmer possibly thought her escaping from her lawful guardians.

Since leaving the farm of the Cypresses, during her five miles of flight, Honor had not seen a house, nor a shelter of any description. The country through which she was passing was to her like an unknown world. The unwholesome fens, the malarious air, the wide-spread look of desolation, the yawning road-side ditches, seemed to her strange and unreal.

"I'm so tired!" she cried at last piteously. "So tired! I must stop. I must rest. Oh, what is that?"

She halted and listened, with great wild eyes.

It was the clatter of a horse's hoofs.

"It is that horseman who followed Darrel Moer," she thought, in a panic. "They are coming back, and the horseman is in advance. They mean me some awful harm. I feel it. They will find me in the thickets or the fens. Where shall I hide? Oh, Heaven save me!"

She ran along the road with a sudden gathering of all her little remaining strength, spurred by her terrors as some jaded horse is spurred on to a last terrible effort.

And after her came the pursuing horseman.

The girl's strength was waning. She could hold out but a minute longer. In that last minute she was conscious of a cottage close at hand—a low stone cottage, with an overhanging roof. She staggered toward it, opened the little gate, crept wearily up the narrow walk, and dropped, in an utter exhaustion, into a dusky clump of bushes, unable to reach the door.

"I—I cannot stop here," she murmured. "They will find me here. I must go on further."

She crept away on her hands and knees over a patch of green grass into a denser thicket of ornamental bushes, whose early and dense foliage reached even to the ground, and perfectly screened her.

She had hardly settled herself into this obscurity when the horseman came riding up. He halted abruptly at the gate, which had fortunately swung shut, and uttered a yell that was intended to arouse the inmates of the cottage. It had that effect. An upper window opened, and a woman's head looked out in surprise at him. Sounds such as that to which he had given utterance were not common on that lonely road and at that hour.

Grimrod raised his hat to the woman.

"Excuse me, Madam," he said politely, "but I am in search of my daughter, who is not in her right mind, and has fled from her home. She would be somewhere about here by this time. Have you taken her in?"

"I have not, sir," replied the woman courteously.

"I may have passed her, or she may be on ahead," said Grimrod. "There have been no turns, so she cannot have quitted this road. My son-in-law is coming on behind, Madam, and he may ask you the same question that I have done. My daughter is only a young girl, seventeen, Madam, and of most striking appearance, having black eyes and golden hair. She calls herself Honor Glint, and has a great terror of her husband, who adores her. If she should have hidden herself in the fens until we passed—insane people are very cunning—and if she should come to you, Madam, be kind enough to detain her."

With another bow, he spurred away.

The woman retreated from the window, leaving it open.

Honor laid her cheek upon the damp ground, the words of Grimrod ringing in her ears.

"His daughter!" she thought. "What can that mean? Can I be the person he meant? Has Darrel Moer found some man like himself to personate my father and force me into some course repugnant to me?"

The suspicion seemed to her to be confirmed when Darrel Moer drove up in his dog-cart, alighted, and knocked at the house door.

The woman, now fully dressed, looked down from her upper window, exclaiming:

"Are you the gentleman in search of his insane wife?"

"Yes—yes. Is she here?"

"No, sir. Your father-in-law stopped to inquire a few minutes ago, and said you would probably also stop. I have not seen the lady."

"Can we have passed her? Can she have taken to the fens? Ah, no, she must be on ahead," said Moer, half distractedly. "Thanks, Madam. If you see her, please detain her."

He sprang again into his vehicle and drove on toward Somersham. The woman leaned upon her window sill and looked after him.

Honor tried to rise, but her strength was gone. Her whole being seemed one throbbing pulse. She knew she could not continue her journey on foot, and a feeling of utter desperation came over her. She could not throw herself upon the pity of the woman at the window above her—that was certain. She stirred feebly, resolved to travel on, but the exertion made her quiver with pain, and a low moan burst involuntarily from her lips—such was her exhaustion, such her nearness to fainting down.

The woman at the window started and looked down into her house yard.

"What was that?" she asked, as if speaking to herself. "Ah!"

The girl comprehended, or at least thought that her presence was discovered. With one supreme effort she crept out of the shrubbery and looked upward with a pale prayerful face, from out of which her dusky eyes glowed like suns.

"Oh, pity me!" she pleaded. "Help me! I am not insane. I am not married. Save me! in God's name, save me!"

The woman uttered an ejaculation, hesitated, looked in the direction in which the dog-cart had vanished, and then withdrew from the window. Honor heard her descend the stairs and open the house door. She came out upon the patch of lawn, bent over the girl, and then picked her up in her strong arms and carried her into the cottage.

She laid her upon a chintz-covered couch, in a cozy little parlor, locked the door and lighted a candle.

She was a woman of large frame, muscular, active, portly, with a broad, honest, country-bred face, indicative of a kindly nature. Honor's eyes looked up into hers with wild pleading, and then the weary lids drooped in an utter exhaustion.

The young girl had not swooned, but she was nearer to unconsciousness than she had ever been in her life.

The woman brought a spoonful of brandy and forced it between her lips. She removed the hat and sacque, and loosened the corsage, putting her hand upon the girl's heart.

"Poor little creature!" the woman muttered. "She don't look insane. I'll take care of her till her relations come for her. How cold she is! She must be got warm, or she'll have a fit of sickness after this exposure. She isn't able to do a hand's turn for herself. I'll have to wait on her."

She gathered her up again in her arms, and carried her up stairs to her own room and her own bed. The girl was limp and almost lifeless. The woman gently removed the little boots from the weary feet, and loosened the golden hair upon the small head.

"How like! how very like!" she said, with a heavy sigh.

She began to remove the clothing from the tired form. When the sleeve of the dress came off in her gentle hands, and the light fell upon the two memorable marks on Honor's arm—those marks the sight of which had so startled the Hungarian Countess—the woman gave a great cry, and fell upon her knees by the bedside, and chafed the girl's hands, and called wildly upon her.

The girl opened her eyes wearily.

"Who are you?" cried the woman. "Tell me—your name."

"I am not his wife," the girl moaned. "Indeed I am not. His wife is dead. I am only Honor Glint—"

"Is that your real name?" asked the woman, with a fierce intonation; her very being seemed stirred to its deepest depths. "It is not. Say it is not."

The girl looked at her interlocutor in a sort of weary surprise.

"No, it is not," she said. "Oh, I am so tired!"

"One word—what is your real name?"

"I—I don't know."

The woman, with another strange cry, this time full of joy, thanksgiving and exultation, swooped down upon the girl and showered kisses and tears upon her, speaking a host of incoherent words, all of which Honor was too numbed and tired to understand.

At last the woman calmed herself, and with the gentleness of a mother undressed the girl and tucked her up in the bed. Honor presently fell asleep, and slept until morning. The woman watched by her all night, bending over her now and then with tears and kisses and thanksgivings.

When Honor awakened in the morning, rested and refreshed, her hostess was still beside her, and looking at her with tender, loving eyes.

The girl looked around her with a start, and with a gathering terror, as a remembrance of the previous night came over her.

"Hush, dear," said the woman gently. "You are safe here. Those men shall not take you from me unless you choose to go. Lie quiet, while I prepare your breakfast."

The girl smiled restfully up into the honest face of her hostess and lay back on her pillow.

The woman went out, and was gone some time, returning at last with a dainty breakfast, which she fed to her guest with a motherly tenderness, hovering over her as a hen broods over her chickens.

"My name is Mrs. Williams," she said. "My husband is a sailor on the *Argonaut*, and I'm expecting him home soon—"

"Oh, then I am sure you will be my friend," cried Honor. "The *Argonaut* is papa's ship. Papa is Captain Glint."

"But surely, Miss, you are not his own daughter? You said last night you did not know your true name."

"Did I? How came I to say that? But I do not. I am only an adopted daughter. Captain Glint found me in the streets of Valetta—"

"I knew it!"

"In the arms of my nurse, Margaret Cropsey, who was stricken with fever," continued Honor. "She became delirious the very next morning, and papa—Captain Glint, you know—put in at Marseilles, and left her at the hospital. When he inquired for her on his next trip, he found that she had recovered and was discharged. I was left on his hands, and he brought me up as his daughter."

A very rain of tears was falling upon the woman's face as she listened to this recital.

"Have you an ornament in the shape of an onyx ball?" she asked.

"Yes," said the girl wonderingly. "It is sewed into my dress. I was afraid they would steal that, after they stole the certificate—Ah, you don't know. But how did you come to know of the ball?"

Mrs. Williams did not answer. She went to the girl's dress, and found the hiding-place of the ornament, and removed it. She turned the ball over and over in her hands, and asked:

"Has it ever been opened?"

"No. Is it not solid? We thought it solid. If it opens, please open it—"

"It is not time. Another hand than mine must open it."

The woman clasped the necklace around the girl's neck, and looked at her adoringly. She presently asked:

"Who were those people in pursuit of you last night?"

Honor replied by telling her story unreservedly, beginning with her marriage to Darrel Moer, and recounting all that had since occurred. The woman seemed to know something about her, and Honor trusted her instinctively. Besides, her only hope was in this woman. She was in constant terror lest her enemies should find her, and demand that she should be given up to them.

"And you were married to Darrel Moer!" exclaimed Mrs. Williams. "What a strange fatality! But you are not his wife, and never have been, save for those words at the altar. You will thank God for that. I shall take you to London to-morrow. In the mean time you are perfectly safe here. Even if he should trace you here, Darrel Moer could not take you from me."

Good Mrs. Williams did not know Darrel Moer!

The long Sunday passed peacefully and without alarm. Nothing was seen of Honor's enemies. In the evening, Honor, fully dressed, lay upon the couch in the cozy parlor, and Mrs. Williams went out to prepare her supper.

Honor was a little weary still. Her eyes drooped, and she did not see a face peering in at the window through a crack in the shutters—the face of Darrel Moer. She did not dream that danger was so near.

But Darrel Moer and Grimrod were both in the house yard, and both had seen her. They went around to the kitchen door and lifted the latch. It yielded, and they entered the house. Mrs. Williams confronted them with a man's bravery and resolution, but they pushed past her and entered the parlor.

Honor sprang up, her eyes aflame, and stood at bay.

Grimrod seized upon her and crushed her in his arms, retreating toward the door.

Darrel Moer covered his retreat with a pistol.

"This girl is my wife, and insane, whatever she may have told you. Dare to molest us, and you will rue it," he cried menacingly.

Grimrod hurried out with his struggling captive to the dog-cart, and put her in it. He bound her hands and feet, and threatened her if she did not keep silence.

"Don't irritate me!" he hissed in her ears "Be careful. I'm a devil when my blood is up!"

And Honor was forced to keep silence, reading murder in his eyes.

Darrel Moer, with his loaded weapon, backed out at the house door, came down the walk, sprang into the dog-cart, seized the reins, and drove in the direction of the Cypresses.

Mrs. Williams stood at her gate in the gloom, screaming and moaning in her anguish.

"You'd ought to have settled that creature," said Grimrod. "She'll identify us—"

"How can she? Our faces are muffled," said Moer. "She won't know us, not having seen us. We don't want more blood on our hands than is necessary. We must hurry up with this thing we've undertaken and get back to London. I wouldn't undergo again these twenty-four hours of suspense and fright for a million pounds! The girl must be disposed of before midnight!"

Grimrod nodded assent, and Moer drove on rapidly. And the conviction came to Honor that they were conveying her to her doom—that they meant to kill her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—The most certain way to make a man your enemy is to tell him you esteem him such.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1872.

Better Than Ever.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER
FOR THE NEW YEAR, 1873.
THE GREAT FAMILY PAPER.

Instructive and entertaining as the *Ledger* has been in the past, we hope and intend to make it still more instructive and entertaining in the future. Our experience is greater than heretofore, and our ambition to make the *Ledger* the best paper of the kind published in the world, is undiminished.

It is the aim of the *Ledger* to cultivate a taste for reading in the rising generation, and at the same time, by the character of its contents, to contribute constantly to their moral and intellectual improvement and growth.

An epicure might as well undertake to write down what he would have for dinner every day for twelve months to come, as for us to attempt, at this time, a catalogue of all the good things that will be spread before the readers of the *Ledger* in 1873. Our old subscribers will bear us witness that all the promises we have ever made have always been more than fulfilled. We never let slip an opportunity to obtain any really good and desirable thing. Expense and trouble never stand in our way. And in this respect, as it has been in the past, so it will be in the future.

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All our favorite old writers will continue to write for the *Ledger;* and we are always on the keen look-out for any new developments of *real* rising genius.

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ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Grim Want.

"Will you give me a little change, sir, to get something to eat? I haven't had anything to-day."

We turned back to the speaker who thus accosted us. He was a young man, gaunt, wasted and pale; but with none of the visible marks of intemperance. It was in the edge of the evening—already dark; and his words were fully substantiated by his half-starved appearance.

Seeing that we did not fully recognize him, he continued: "I used to—" recalling a circumstance which reminded us where we had seen him.

As soon as a bit of money was placed in his hand, he rushed away like a famishing dog for a piece of meat.

What is it, we asked of ourselves as we moved on, that has placed this young man in such a condition of want? He does not appear to have been drinking. Probably it is mere carelessness and improvidence. By accident or neglect he happened to lose his place, and having laid aside nothing for a rainy day, before he could find another situation he was reduced to absolute beggary.

What a situation to be in, in this vast, cold, merciless city! And if it is so bad for a young man, what must it be for young women!

It seems to us that, for some reason or other, such instances of destitution are more common this Fall than usual, though there are always a plenty of them.

We are not sure that our later **FRANKLIN** is not right in advising young people to "go West." Of all places in the world to be without employment, without friends and without money, a great city is the most dreary and the worst.

In a new country there is always a chance for a poor man to live and to improve his condition, however little money there may be to be had. Hard as one's lot there may possibly be, it is not so hard as loneliness and want in the heart of the heartless metropolis.

◆

—The Philadelphia *Ledger* says:

"The New York *Ledger* opposes Mr. Bergh's mode of preventing cruelty to animals during the recent horse plague in New York."

This is true, and there are a great many others who agree with us in the opinion, that Mr. **BERGH'S** method is not the proper one. Indeed, we think there are few, if any, now who differ from our view.

With a man of practical sense in Mr. **BERGH'S** place, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would become one of the most useful in the country; but his half-crazy conduct makes the whole thing ridiculous.

Gilbert Darrow's Mistake—He Turns a Deaf Ear to a Cry for Help.

It was night—the night of October 20th, 1872; or, more strictly speaking, it was in the early morning of October 21st, that **GILBERT DARROW**, who lives on the banks of the beautiful Lake Osceola, near Lake Mahopac, a short hour's ride from this city, heard the piercing cry of a woman in distress come over the waters of the Lake. "Murder!" she said. He raised his window. "Murder!" was repeated. "Help! Come quick!" Then, almost immediately after, he heard a gurgling noise.

He asked, "What is the matter? Who is there? What do you want?"

Receiving no answer, with this he contented himself, and, as he explained it, concluded that he had been fooled, and went back to bed! The voice, he was certain, was that of a female; but it seems never to have occurred to him that it might have been suddenly stopped by the same force that had caused it to cry out, "Murder! Murder! Help! Come quick!"

To bed and to sleep he went.

To another and a deeper sleep went the now voiceless supplicant for help, whose cries had been unheeded.

At daylight a loose and tenantless boat was seen floating on the water. And three weeks later, at the very spot whence the voice of distress came, there arose to the surface from their damp and cold depths, the body of a beautiful girl of seventeen.

She was the daughter of a farmer who also dwelt by the shore of the lake.

How she came to her death remains an unsolved mystery: whether by her own hand or that of another.

She had two lovers: the one the vicious husband of a wife from whom he was separated; the other a respectable country bumpkin, who would call on her and sit until bedtime—too diffident ever to say a word—and then take up his hat and leave. The lawless lover had won her heart; her sensible parents naturally preferred his less entertaining rival.

Whatever the secret of her sad and untimely end may be, it will ever remain to be regretted that **GILBERT DARROW** should not have been aroused to a speedy investigation by the death-shrieks of the perishing girl.

◆

"Thou Shalt Do No Murder."

It is stated that there are twenty-three murderers now in the Tombs. Some of them have recently gone there fresh from the corpses of their victims. Others have been there more than a year. In fact, many of them have been there so long that they are beginning to be forgotten, and their crimes are fading, or have already faded, from the memory of the public. Months or years hence some of them may be hanged, but slight indeed will be the moral effect of their punishment in comparison with what it would have been had justice been executed upon them speedily.

When a certain young man inquired of the Lord what he should do that he might have eternal life, and was told to keep the commandments, he asked, "Which?" "*Thou shalt do no murder,*" was the first commandment which the Lord then repromulgated in response to the young man's question. The young men of the present day seem to pay less and less heed to this divine command. The twenty-three murderers in the Tombs are but a small part of those who have imbrued their hands in human blood in this city within the last few years. As a rule, those who murder in secret escape. And when those who murder in public, and make no attempt to flee, are arrested, their cases are allowed to drag on from month to month and year to year, till, from sheer weariness and neglect on the part of the prosecution, they escape the punishment due to their crimes.

Let this reprehensible system be changed—let justice be duly executed upon men-killers, and it is reasonable to believe that murder will then cease to stalk abroad at noonday in our streets.

◆

There Were Two Mothers-in-law.

"And how does Albert get on?" asked we of a mutual acquaintance, after a young man in whom we had taken some interest.

"Well," said he, "I met him the other day, and he looked very bad."

"How is it about that trouble with his wife? Is he divorced from her?" we inquired.

"Not legally; only he made up his mind to go his way, and his wife made up hers to go her way."

"Has he any children?" we continued.

"Yes," was the response; "he has a beautiful little girl. You see, *there were two mothers-in-law,* and he stuck to his mother, and she stuck to hers."

And in these few brief words was written the wreck of several lives.

Why is it that mothers—so many mothers, not all—seem incapable of bringing their minds to realize that the new relations which their children assume, when they marry, are binding upon them, and ought not to be interfered with?

The interference and intermeddling of mothers-in-law have led to the destruction of domestic peace and happiness in many a home, and to the institution of many a wretched suit for divorce.

When your children are married, the greatest kindness that you can do them, as a general thing, so far as their personal conduct and relations are concerned, is to let them alone.

◆

Married People Should Agree.

THOMAS PEYTON, a young man of twenty-one, was recently arrested in England, charged with an attempt to commit suicide by swallowing oxalic acid.

The poor fellow had suffered greatly from the effects of the poison, although it did not destroy his life. His only excuse was that he had "had a few words with his wife, to whom he had only been married a short time."

The magistrate said he had been "guilty of a most wicked and cowardly act," and remanded him to prison.

The conduct of this young man was bad enough; but it was not as bad as that of numerous husbands in this country, who, on having a few words of difficulty with their wives, have tried to kill them, instead of themselves.

◆

A Good Prescription.

A writer on the prevailing horse disease says the best remedy is to "keep them warm," and "husband their strength."

We think this is not only good for horses, but that it would be exactly the proper treatment for all the young women of the country.

◆

A Cat Inhaling Strychnine.

[From the Poughkeepsie (N. Y.) Press.]

An Albany cat, desirous of emulating that Portland cat who killed a baby by sucking its breath, tried the same experiment on a drunkard which he found lying insensible on the street. When the recumbent Bacchanalian revived, he found a dead cat lying on his shirt bosom, with all the marks of strychnine poisoning.

Former Frequency of Prize Fights—Fatal Encounter between Two Eton Boys.

There are but few persons in the rising generation who can have any idea of the frequency of what are denominated "prize fights," and of the influence exerted by such brutal exhibitions on the public mind in the latter part of the last century, and in the early part of the present one.

One seldom hears of a prize fight now-a-days, either in England or America. The strict penal statutes make it too hazardous to take part in an encounter of this kind without first undertaking a journey to some spot beyond the jurisdiction of the courts. They have been growing less frequent for the last forty years; and the better classes have not countenanced them, even as spectators, for many years.

But half a century back it was very different. In Great Britain all the proceedings of the Prize Ring excited general interest, and the reports of matches between notorious pugilists were read with avidity by all classes of society. Many of the fashionable men about town and at the Universities employed professionals in the "manly art"—so called—to give them daily instruction; and it was the correct thing to attend the fights, and to be thoroughly conversant with all the movements in "Fistiana."

What did more than any other one thing to destroy this taste was the fatal termination to several of these prize fights. On more than one occasion one of the combatants died while on the ground, or shortly afterward. The prevailing fashion had already penetrated to the public schools; and the saddest case of death in the arena occurred at Eton, then, as now, the greatest of England's public schools.

One Sunday afternoon in February, 1825, two of the scholars at Eton, the Hon. F. A. **COOPER** and **GEORGE WOOD**, a nephew of the Marquis of **LONDONDERRY**, quarrelled in the play-ground, and coming to blows, fought for some minutes before they were separated by the Captain, or head boy of the school. It was then decided that a pugilistic contest should take place between the two boys on the next afternoon. **COOPER** was only fifteen years of age; his opponent, **WOOD**, about seventeen, and taller and stronger.

As by agreement, they stripped at four o'clock on Monday, and set to in the presence of a crowd of the other scholars. **COOPER** was active and full of pluck, but in the ninth and tenth rounds he became very weak. The backers of the respective combatants had, after the fashion of older pugilists, brought flasks of brandy into the field, with which **COOPER** and **WOOD** were stimulated between the rounds. After the tenth round, **COOPER** should have been taken away; but his friends were not willing to yield, and his second, **LEITH**, was obliged to give him brandy in the eleventh and subsequent rounds.

The young men continued fighting till nearly six o'clock, and until they had fought about sixty rounds. At the end of the last round, young Mr. **COOPER** fell heavily upon his head, and never spoke afterward. He had received repeated blows on different parts of the head during the fight, at one time a severe blow on the temple felling him to the ground. **WOOD**, before the last round, wished to stop fighting, as it was time for him to go to his tutor. Unfortunately the deceased's party said, "We will have another round. We are in no hurry." And it was at the conclusion of this next round that the deceased, **COOPER**, fell from a hard blow. He was carried to his lodgings, at the house of a clergyman, by his brothers, who had been present at the fight.

The deceased "appeared as if he was asleep" when they reached his lodgings. He remained in this comatose state until ten o'clock, when a surgeon was sent for, but the unfortunate boy had ceased to breathe before his arrival. A coroner's inquest was held on the following day. The jury viewed the body. The temples, eyes, and upper part of the cheek-bones were black, and there were marks of violence about the ribs, breast, etc. One of the surgeons thought there must have been a rupture of some internal artery.

The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter; but on the subsequent arraignment of **WOOD** and **LEITH**—**COOPER'S** second—none of the witnesses appeared. In the absence of evidence, a verdict of not guilty was brought in.

Mr. **COOPER** was a son of the then Earl of **SHAFTESBURY**, and a brother of the present Earl, who is known as "the Working Man's Friend" on account of his noble exertions in behalf of the working men in the manufacturing districts of England. He has succeeded in having the celebrated "Ten Hour Bill" passed, abridging the hours of labor; and is now occupied in other schemes for ameliorating the condition of the laborer.

◆

A Case for Counsel.

Some forty years ago, when the States of Ohio and Michigan were at the point of going to war on a question of boundary, which they were only prevented from doing by a timely intervention of Federal authority under the auspices of Old Hickory, Uncle Tom Toddiequaffer, whose farm lay in the disputed territory, rode into town one morning, and after putting up his horse and *bittering,* walked into Lawyer Glybb's office.

"Mornin', Squire," said the old gentleman.

"Good-morning, Mr. Toddiequaffer," responded the lawyer.

"Can't nothin' be done about this yer?" inquired Uncle Tom.

"On what particular point do you wish advice?" asked Mr. Glybb.

"Can't a writ of *Magny Charty* or *Sashyrary* or *Firyfashus,* or somethin', be got out to put a stop to it?"

"Put a stop to what?"

"*Why, runnin' this yer line so's to sot us over into Michigan, whar ev'rybuddy knows thar's nothin' but fever 'n ager 'n milk-sickness 'n mean whiskey!*"

We never learned what advice the lawyer gave.
J. C.

◆

A Good Example for Rich Church-Members to Follow.

[From the Hudson (N. Y.) Daily Star.]

A HANDSOME PRESENT.—One day last week the Rev. D. R. Frazer, formerly of this city, but now located in Buffalo, was surprised in the following manner. About dinner-time the door bell attached to his residence, No. 317 Franklin street, was pulled, and in answer to the summons "little Ike," the attendant, went to see what was wanted, when he was requested to tell Mr. Frazer that a handsome horse and fine top phaeton, standing in front of the door, was a gift to him from a member of his church. Of course the good-natured and kind-hearted clergyman was surprised. Since that time he has enjoyed many a fine ride behind the "free-will offering."

THE NOBLEST STUDY OF MAN IS THE ANIMAL.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Men talk now-a-days a great deal about posterity, and we are exhorted to do this and avoid that, on account of its effect upon posterity. We do not object to this. We recognize our duty to send forward a good stock of health, to develop nascent tendencies for good, to kill off, each one, a share of the ancestral animal which the whole world is struggling to get free from.

It becomes every man to consider by what (Darwinian) road he came to his present level. It would greatly direct our efforts at further development if only we knew the line of descent. Every one with half an eye can see how it is with some men. That serpent eye which some men carry in their head is as good as a document from the Old Serpent himself.

Over the way is a man whose face has such an equine look that I should not be surprised, at any time, to hear him break out a-neighing. Who does not know wolves in men's clothing? We have lived in sight of men for years who had not fairly outgrown the bear. Foxes grow a great deal faster toward perfection at one end than at the other; for while the fox's brush is quite sloughed off in many instances, the fox face remains very little the worse for wear. There are people, known and read of all men, who need only a little wool judiciously arranged to secure for them a welcome in any shepherd's flock.

Look at that little housewife of the olden type, small, wiry, with sharp features and a restless, fiery industry, who seems driven by the formic spirit of her undoubted ancestors; for is she anything but a well-developed Christian ant, fierce with the very spirit that is seen in the ant family?

What child ever, in summer, could resist the fun of turning over a large flat stone in the pastures, to see the motley brood of strange creatures, beetles, bugs, worms, and millipeds, or "thousand legs," race for their lives!

That *milliped* did not race for nothing. He felt the drawings of futurity. How he ever got on end I cannot imagine; but it is plain that his nine hundred and ninety-eight legs were absorbed in the two remaining. Have you never seen people of such incessant wiggling power, that it was, in the light of Darwinianism, perfectly plain by what line they ascended? Look, too, at the monkeys. They seem to hover on the dividing line between rational and brute creation, and at some unguarded moment, some of them may have hopped over, and have never been able to get back.

To some, these remarks may seem couched in a spirit remote from the sobriety of true philosophic speculation. But no one, upon a due consideration, will see what a help it would be to self-improvement, if he could know his primal nature, and study himself in the animal whose skin his ancestors wore, and whose genius yet lingers in spots throughout his nature.

It would be of no use to exhort people who came up into the human condition by way of a house fly, incessantly buzzing, pretentious, and useless, to avoid the faults which inhere in those who came forward by the road of the bee or the wasp. We can understand why a man whose ten thousandth grandfather was a wild boar of the wood, should go to sleep while his minister is discoursing on the sins of fastidiousness. In like manner, the heir and representative of an old Numidian lion might refuse the prelections on meekness, non-resistance and submissiveness which his ovine pastor was doling in his ear.

The fact is, the modern discoveries in Natural History must revolutionize the processes of teaching.

The process of self-examination is yet to be conducted upon a physiological basis. Each man must trace up his ancestry, and when he finds the scent, then, like a true hound, he must lay his nose to it, and follow home till he finds the spot where his grand ancestor branched off; and then he will have the means of ascertaining, with scientific accuracy, how he should proceed to shred off the remains of the animal, and how get fairly upon the track of the angelic.

◆

One of the Mysteries.

There is one thing which a man can never understand, and that is, how a woman can be in love with "that fellow," "that other fellow;" "he is all very well, but what does she see in him to take a notion to, you know?" He isn't handsome—not to speak of. Of course, he isn't smart. What on earth is it? She is absolutely going to marry him. There's something queer about it. She must think he has money!

No matter who "*that fellow*" is, it is all the same. "He talks too much; always holding forth; horribly loquacious." "He doesn't say anything—regular dummy."

"He is always capering about like a monkey; can't do anything but dance." "He doesn't even dance—the greatest poke you ever saw!"

"He always has his nose in a book—literary and all that—must bore her to death." "Doesn't read anything—asked 'who wrote Shakespeare!' Nice fellow *that,* for a smart girl."

"Goes to church three times a Sunday and to *all* the meetings—nice life she'll lead." "Horribly fast—does not know his prayers. Ah! if girls knew about fellows."

"Dreadfully extravagant." "Quite a miser."

"Nothing against him that I know of; but how *can* a girl really like him?"

The mystery is never solved. The conundrum is never answered. The best man goes to the wedding, and while the bride blushing behind her white vail promises to love, honor and obey, he wonders still, "how the deuce she *can* marry that fellow!"

MARY KYLE DALLAS.

◆

[From the New York Herald, Nov. 12.]

The exact cause of the Chicago conflagration has always been a mystery. Popular fiction attributed it to the action of Mrs. O'Leary's cow, which kicked over a kerosene lamp while being milked by its mistress, setting fire to the barn, from which the flames communicated to the surrounding buildings, and so spread. This fanciful story has undoubtedly been looked upon as a good joke by those who were present in the doomed city on the fatal night. My own opinion, strongly fortified by corroborative proof, is, that incendiarism was at the bottom of the whole thing, aided of course by the favorable state of the weather and the peculiar dryness of the atmosphere.

The mystery in question will be cleared up to the entire satisfaction of our readers in Mr. **LEWIS'** great story of **THE FIRE SPREADERS**; or, *The Burners of Chicago.* The narrative of our contributor shows beyond all question that incendiarism *was* at the bottom of the Chicago fire; and the whole mode and manner by which that giant iniquity was brought about will be traced step by step in this stirring romance of reality.

◆

David Crockett—A Child of the Forest.

[From the Turf, Field and Farm.]

Tennessee was the birthplace of Crockett. Coming into the world toward the close of the eighteenth century, he found the greater portion of the State a wilderness, and so the early life of the man was passed in hardy adventure. Like Daniel Boone, he became a child of the forest, and found pleasure in shooting deer, bears and Indians. He acquired extraordinary skill in the use of the rifle, and he sent a ball whizzing through the skull of a Seminole with as little compunction as he drew bead on a buck, or even the head of a squirrel. Giving up, in a measure, his backwoods life, he was elected to Congress from Tennessee in 1827, and again in 1833. He also published a book of his own adventures. As politician and humorous author, Davy Crockett won a national reputation. But the closing scenes of his life were highly tragical. He fought in the war with Mexico, was captured, and afterward was treacherously shot.

THE POOR NOT WITH THEM.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I read it over, thus and so:
"Hundreds to build the chapel wall,
Wherein the poor may come to pray,
Nor mingle with the rich at all."

Until at last I "dreamed a dream,"
Wherein, defying "sense and law,"
A strange and ancient company
Of common fishermen I saw.

From whence they came I could not tell;
Weary and sad they seemed to be;
And still by graven porch and spire
They watched and waited wistfully.

They listened to the Sabbath bells,
Or lingered where some organ tone
Recalled the surge of Galilee,
Making its low, unceasing moan.

They looked within the archèd door,
Where ruddy lights and shadows gay
Shone over dainty garments worn
By mighty ones who seemed to pray.

And then the fisher folk looked down
On dingy raiment weather-worn,
And crept away; save one more bold,
By overmast'ring zeal upborne,

Who asked the sexton at the door,
"We seek our Master. Is he near?"
And heard his answer: "No; oh, no:
There's none but carriage Christians here."

And still they waited for a while,
Until the doors were opened wide,
Though while the silken stream went by
They drew their shabby robes aside,

But never found the friendly face
That Galilean sunshine knew,
Nor heard the footfall of the feet
That walked through Galilean dew.

Perplexed, they looked again to see
Wherein they had not read aright
The letter he had left for them,
Then drew their loosened sandals tight.

Like men who fain would journey far,
Who had no longer business here,
Save to press on. Silent and slow
They passed the lowly chapel near.

Pausing to hear the echo sweet
Of Christian hymn and humble prayer.
They whispered softly, as they stood,
"Perchance the Master waiteth there."

Hark! floating on the summer air
A strange sweet whisper, words they knew:
"Lo! I am with thee, little flock."
Their willing footsteps nearer drew.

Down by the scarred and blessèd feet
The pilgrims knelt, with sob and cry,
While from His lips assurance came:
"Be not afraid. Lo! it is I."

And then I dreamed the chapel wall
Grew radiant with sunless Light,
Through which the pilgrim fishermen
And He they sought went out of sight.

◆

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE.

An Incident of the Late Conflagration.

My friend requested me not to publish his name, as he didn't care to have his private business affairs given to the world; but the chief incident of the matter has a phase so pleasant that we cannot suffer it to lapse into obscurity.

Frank B——, a young man of eight-and-twenty, with a wife and two children, had, by long and persistent labor in the manufacture of a patented article, accumulated property to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, and upward. During the past summer his health failed to such a degree that he heeded the advice of his physician and left an occupation which was slowly but surely wearing him out.

Toward the last of August he sold his manufactory, together with all interest in the patent, for sixty thousand dollars. Ten thousand dollars he invested in a suburban residence, which he secured by deed to his wife, and fifty thousand dollars he placed in bank, to await the opening of some new path to business.

The months of September and October Frank B—— gave to recuperation, and on the first day of November, with health restored, he came into Boston to look around for business. A friend tapped him on the shoulder with,—

"Frank, I know just the place for you. Come with me."

And his friend took him to a large wholesale house in Franklin street, one of the partners in which wished to go to St. Louis, and was anxious to sell out. Mr. S—— was the partner, and fifty thousand dollars cash would purchase his whole interest in the house. Frank was favorably impressed, and proposed an examination of the stock and accounts of the firm. The pending Presidential election delayed matters, and it was not until Wednesday, November 6th, that the examination was completed. On Thursday and Friday the final arrangements were made, and on this Friday afternoon the papers were prepared. The parties to the proposed contract separated on Friday evening, and on the following day, Saturday, the 9th, they were to meet at twelve o'clock at noon, at which time the papers were to be signed, and Frank B—— was to pay down his fifty thousand dollars cash, and step into Mr. S——'s place in the firm. And on this same Friday Frank called on the cashier of the bank on State street, and informed him that he should want to draw out his fifty thousand dollars on the following day.

Saturday morning came, bright and beautiful, and Frank proposed to take the cars at ten o'clock for Boston. His residence was ten miles distant from the city. He was ready to set forth—had put on his overcoat, and was taking a parting caution from his wife—when a female neighbor came hurriedly in for help. A domestic calamity had fallen upon her household—her husband was in delirium. This husband was Frank's dear friend—a wayward, impulsive man—his own worst enemy—and now suffering from the results of an election debauch. Frank pulled out his watch.

"In Heaven's name," pleaded the neighbor, "come to poor Arthur! I dare not leave him longer. You can control him."

"What can I do?" gasped Frank, looking first at his watch, and then at his wife. "If I lose this train my business goes to smash."

"Let it be till Monday," said his wife.

"But on Monday morning Mr. S—— must leave for Montreal. This is the only chance. Such another will not be mine for a long time, if ever."

The suffering wife of the suffering neighbor covered her face with her hands. There was a fearful depth of mute appeal in her movement. Mrs. B—— laid her hand upon her husband's arm, and solemnly said,—

"Frank, go with Nellie, and help poor Arthur. Do right, and leave the result to God. If harm should come to Arthur which you might have prevented—"

"Stop!" cried Frank. "I cannot leave my old school-fellow thus. Let the business go.—Come, Nellie."

He found Arthur sadly in need of help, and his was the power to render it. He remained with his friend until noon, and then left him in charge of a physician.

It was past two o'clock when Frank B—— reached Boston. The bank was closed, and he found that Mr. S——, after having waited in vain two hours, had gone to Lowell, where it was possible that he might dispose of his business to one of their correspondents of the Merrimack Corporation. But Frank might come in on Monday and see how matters stood.

Frank B—— returned to his home feeling that he had met a great loss; but his wife was cheerful, and ventured the remark that it might be all for the best as it was.

And with the dawning of the Sabbath morning, when the messengers from the city brought word of the terrible conflagration which had laid low nearly a thousand palaces of commerce, and that of all the imposing marts of Franklin street not one was left, Frank lifted up his heart in thankfulness that he had been spared. In saving his brother who had fallen by the wayside, he had unconsciously saved himself.

"Really," he said to me, as he told me the story, "it is pleasant to fall in with the fancy of my wife: she thinks she can trace the finger of Providence in the work."

S. C., JR.

◆

—A. L. Torrey, of Geneva, who is interested in the Clay blood, shows a degree of mortification at the quitting qualities of that breed of horses which it is painful to behold. He not only does this, but he takes a very cowardly way of doing it. He has been at it anonymously for two years past. All this is very natural: we could hardly expect a game supporter of quitting blood.

IN NOVEMBER.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Whenever the wild November,
  In mantle of hodden gray,
Quenches the flame of the golden-rod,
  And tramples the leaf in clay;
When the aster is dead in the woodland,
  And the meadows are sad and sere,
And the vague hills wear the dying grace
  Of the sunset of the year;

Threading the rugged highway,
  By valley and upland lone,
Where late in the dawn of the spring-time
  The blue of the hare-bell shone,
I wander away to the woodlands,
  To a dim, sequestered glade,
Where once, in an autumn vanished,
  I and my sweet love strayed.

Here is the mossy dingle,
  And here is the fallen pine,
Where, wrapt in a rosy dream, we talked
  Of the days that should be divine;
When freed from the hateful shackles
  One passionate spirit wore,
Our feet should wander blindly
  In separate paths no more.

Eight times the waning autumn,
  In garments sodden and sere,
Hath trodden out the purple and gold
  Of the sunset of the year;
And haggard and gray and ghostly,
  The sad days, one by one,
Slip into the gloom of the by-gone,
  Till the wasted years are done.

And still in the gloom and glory
  Of the dying autumn days,
I keep the tryst of the Long Ago,
  In these desolate woodland ways;
I sigh to my soul, and whisper,
  "Vain is thy watch, and vain
Is tear and vigil; the love that is dead
  Can never be mine again!"

But whenever the shrill November
  Comes piping over the hill,
I wait with a wildly beating heart
  For *his* step on the time-worn sill;
For ever, in yearning dreams, his face
  Looks in at the open door,
And I listen in breathless rapture
  For the voice I shall hear no more!

A FATAL INHERITANCE.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," THE "RIVAL SISTERS," ETC.

PART I.

CHAPTER III.

A DOMESTIC TRAITOR.

"Your daughter will soon be quite well again, Mrs. Layton," said Dr. Bland, after completing his duties toward the child. "The sleeping potion I have given her will insure a good night's rest. Set at rest all your apprehensions concerning her, for I assure you she is in no danger."

The pale young mother breathed a sigh of thankfulness, and sank down unnerved for a few moments, with her hands pressed over her face. Her lips did not move, but she was returning thanks to God for the safety of her darling, and asking him for guidance and strength in the thorny path that lay before her. When she looked up again, she was outwardly quite composed, though her eyes were shining with excitement, and her mouth, usually so sweet in its expression, wore a look of decision which almost startled the physician.

The child, exhausted by her sufferings, had already fallen into a light slumber, and Mrs. Layton arose, and quietly said:

"Come with me, Doctor; I wish to speak with you in private, and I can trust Cassy to watch over Lucia till I return. We will go into the library for a few moments. No one will be likely to intrude on us there."

She led the way down the wide winding stairs, lighted by an arched window filled with colored glass, crossed the lofty hall, the floor of which was waxed till it shone as if varnished, but along the slippery surface was laid a narrow Brussels carpet, and in front of the doors that opened from it Persian rugs were placed.

The library communicated with the drawing-room, and the door was pushed to, but not completely closed. Mrs. Layton did not observe this, but motioned her guest to a large chair, and drew up a smaller one in front of him for herself.

The walls were lined with carved cases, filled with a choice selection of books, for the Laytons for generations had been men of culture and of literary taste. Even the present degenerate possessor of the old place had once been fond of study, but now he rarely entered his library.

After a brief pause, during which Mrs. Layton was struggling for perfect self-control, she looked up to the sympathetic face bent toward her, and said:

"I feel as if I can rely on your judgment, Dr. Bland, and trust to you to befriend me in this sorest strait in which a wife can be placed. I must leave my husband; it is impossible for me to remain here, after what has happened this afternoon. Hitherto I have thought it my duty to do so. For no light cause should a woman desert her home and her husband; but I—I have endured so much—*so much* that I would die sooner than reveal, that my courage has broken down. I can no longer fight against fate. I must give up the struggle, and fly to some refuge in which I shall be safe with my child."

Dr. Bland's voice was husky as he asked:

"Is your decision irrevocable, Mrs. Layton?"

"It is. Help me to get away, Doctor. Do not counsel me to stay, for I *cannot*. My whole soul has at last risen in rebellion against the indignities I have so long borne, and I will endure them no longer."

"Then you are utterly alienated from your husband?"

An expression of loathing came into the white face that looked up to him, and he felt that he was answered. But after a pause, she said, in a broken voice:

"I could have loved him, Doctor. I would have been a faithful and affectionate wife to him, if he would have permitted it. I was but a child in years when my marriage took place. I knew nothing of life, nothing of men, and my parents arranged the match. I had no aversion to Mr. Layton; he was ardent in his wooing, and I believed what was told me—that he would make me happy as his wife. At first, he treated me as a petted plaything; then, tired of me, gave himself up to the fatal vice that is destroying him, and I was made to feel that I had bound myself to the worst of all slavery—that of a wife to a tyrannical and dissipated man."

The heart of the listener melted within him as he listened to this simple statement of her wrongs, for he, as the family physician, knew how bitter her trials had been, how patiently they had been borne till now, and he could not blame her for the resolution she had taken, though he foresaw for her much trouble in carrying it out.

"My poor child," he gently said, "what I can do to aid you to effect your escape from the bondage you find too hard to bear, is, I fear, very little; but you may count on my services as if you were my own daughter. There is one thing you do not seem to have thought of; the law gives the father the right to retain possession of the children. You—"

She interrupted him with a cry like that of a wounded tigress, and her eyes gleamed fiercely as she said:

"My child belongs to *me*, and I defy the whole world to tear her from me. What! will any man *dare* to say that Edward Layton is more fit to take charge of a baby girl than I, her mother, am? If that is law, it is not justice, and I will submit to no such tyranny. If I cannot take my Lucia with me, I will stay here and die in her defence; for such will be my fate, if I cannot find means to effect my escape, carrying my child with me."

Her voice sank at the last into a hopeless wail, that went to the heart of one listener at least, for there was another at the imperfectly closed door, trying to catch every word spoken between the two, who thought themselves entirely alone.

After a pause, Dr. Bland said:

"With your husband's habits, he may be willing to relinquish the child to your care. I merely wished to explain to you that if he chooses to retain her, you cannot help yourself. In that event, nothing would be left but evasion, and you must go among strangers, leaving no trace behind by which you could be followed. Have you thought over all these difficulties; and have you the means to live, away from your husband?"

In a depressed tone she replied:

"I have thought a great deal, but to little purpose. I have very little of my own; my father might help me, but he is not rich, and he has a family of young children. My step-mother will have little sympathy for me, I fear, when she finds that I have given up so fine a place as this, and she may influence papa to withhold assistance, thinking to force me back to my deserted home. I have a few hundred dollars, and my jewels are valuable. That is all I have to depend on; but I can sew neatly; I can embroider; and I had rather work from dawn to gloaming than live in this house with the hourly fear that something terrible may happen to my darling."

"You do not know—you cannot dream what it would be, to a woman of your antecedents, to struggle on alone in the world, burdened with a young child. Mr. Layton is a vindictive man, and in the event of a parting between you, he will allow you nothing unless compelled by law to do so. He might give up the child to you, but he would do nothing more."

"That is all I shall ask of him. I will make no demand on his fortune if he will let me go, and take my baby with me. Cassy belongs to me—my father gave her to me when I married, and I shall take her with me whether I leave openly or secretly. So you see I shall not be entirely alone. Tell me what I shall do, Doctor. Shall I effect my escape without speaking of a separation to Mr. Layton, or shall I wait till he is in a condition to judge rationally, and then tell him the determination I have come to?"

"I would advise you by all means not to act precipitately. It will be but justice to Mr. Layton to let him know that you intend to leave him, before taking any steps toward doing so."

"But he is so unreasonable, so violent, and he is threatened with an attack of delirium now. I tremble when I think of the scenes I must witness for days to come, if I do not fly from them while Mr. Layton is incapable of pursuing me. Oh, Doctor, I have had a loaded pistol held to my head, a knife flourished before my face, with such threats and imprecations as would have killed some women through mere fright. How I lived through such scenes I hardly understand. But for the interference of his cousin, I think he would have destroyed me in his last attack. Oh, Doctor Bland, I have all a woman's shrinking from violence and blood, and I—I feel as if I shall not escape his insane wrath much longer if I remain here."

All her composure seemed to have deserted her, and she was trembling and weeping now.

"This is dreadful!" muttered the doctor. "What a wretch that man must be, and my old friend General Layton thought so highly of him when he was a youth. I wonder what could have changed him so much—what evil influences could have been brought to bear upon him, to make him what he is."

In a troubled tone, he presently said:

"I wish I could see clearly what to advise you to do, Mrs. Layton. Your courage seems indeed to have failed you; and no wonder, poor child! for you have a heavy burden to bear. Your little girl, in her present condition, cannot be removed very far, and if I took you to my house, Mr. Layton would probably be guilty of greater violence than he would attempt against you here, with Mr. Crimin to protect you. He would certainly follow you, and no one can tell what he might do, for I am away from home so much that you would possibly have no one to stand between yourself and his fury."

Alice wiped away her tears, and struggled to control herself. She sadly said:

"You are right, Doctor, and I am reckless and unreasonable in my wish to escape new trials even at the risk of my only friend. As you say, Mr. Crimin will protect me. He is a man I neither like nor trust; but he has physical courage, and his influence over Mr. Layton is greater than that of any other person."

"And that influence is not exerted for good to his cousin? I begin to understand. I fear the son is no better man than the father was, and it was a fatal day for Ellinor Layton when she threw herself away on Jack Crimin. He brought her low enough, and left her to die in poverty, while he went off, God knows where, and nothing has been heard from him for more than twenty years."

When Dr. Bland paused, Alice sadly said:

"I may wrong James, but I think I could have won my way with my husband, and induced him to pause in the wild career he has run, if his cousin had not come between us. This house has been his home nearly all his life, and I had not courage to ask Mr. Layton to send him away, though I believe that I might have reformed my husband's habits if he had not had a tempter ever at his side."

"And you have been made a cipher in your own house by this man? I think you had great forbearance not to have made him clearly understand that his presence was not welcome beneath your roof."

"My dear Doctor, he thinks the house more his than mine. I am barely tolerated by Mr. Layton, and in case anything fatal happens to him, James Crimin is the next heir *after my child*. He will be her natural guardian, and her father will be sure to make him her legal one. I—I cannot think she will be safe unless I can remove her far away from this place. So you see that I have more than one motive for wishing to effect my escape."

Dr. Bland regarded her with unfeigned compassion. So young, so inexperienced, so hardly dealt with, he would gladly have taken her to his own home, and cared for her and her child as if she had been his daughter; but he knew that he would have no power to protect her, and that her husband would pursue her, and would probably attempt to shoot him for his interference in his domestic affairs.

After thinking a few moments, he said:

"Your position is a painful and hazardous one, but in attempting too rashly to better it, you may make it worse. I promise to stand your friend, Mrs. Layton, but to aid you effectually, my partisanship must not be suspected. I must call here every day to see Lucia till she is quite recovered, and I suppose from what you have said that I shall be sent for soon on Mr. Layton's account. I shall thus be able to watch over your safety myself, and to consult with you as to what is best to be done in the future. I begin to think that you will be better away from this place, but it may be possible to find means to procure an amicable separation, with a provision for yourself and your child."

The face of Alice looked wan and worn; an expression of utter hopelessness came into it as she listened to these words. She had been passive under ill treatment so long, that it seemed strange to her that her soul had all at once aroused from its lethargy into a desire for swift and vehement action. Her life at Layton had suddenly become unbearable to her, and she felt as if she must die, or go mad, if she did not speedily escape from it. She wearily said:

"I can do nothing but submit, as your judgment is of course better than mine, but it will not be for long. I warn you, Doctor, that I shall do something desperate if I am held in bondage here much longer. If Lucia were not too ill to be removed, I think I should take her in my arms and attempt to fly from this place at all hazards."

"I only wish you would," muttered Crimin, behind the shelter of the half-closed door. "Go into the woods and perish with your dainty darling, and then I should have things here my own way. You suspect me, do you? You fear for your daughter's life? You have keener perceptions than I gave you credit for, fair Alice. I thought I had been too guarded to awaken any fears on her account, but you have seen through me. Your mother love has penetrated the dark purpose that I will yet carry into effect. I will help you to get away, and for a season you may dream of safety for her and for yourself, but my hand is on the fate of both of you, and it shall strike one into nothingness, and grasp the other to my heart as mine—*mine*, in spite of all your efforts to escape me.

"I will use that old idiot, Bland, for my own purposes, but I'll yet find means to pay him fourfold for what he dared to say of me and of my father. I dare say *he* was worthless enough, but no one shall say it with impunity where I can hear it."

He heard Dr. Bland say:

"I think I had better take a look at Mr. Layton, and induce him to take a sedative before I leave. Timely treatment may keep off the attack you apprehend. If I can, I will save you from the terror of seeing him in such a condition as he was the last time I was summoned here to visit him."

Alice murmured some inaudible reply, and the two arose and left the room, unconscious that nearly all they had said had been overheard by a third person.

Crimin was about to pass through a door communicating with the veranda, on which he had left Layton asleep, when he was startled by a violent knocking above, mingled with curses, and wild cries more like the howling of an enraged wild beast than the tones of a human voice.

A cynical sneer came to his lips, and his eyes gleamed ferociously, as he muttered:

"Ned is after the child again, and Cassy has locked the door against him. I must go up, or there will be the deuse to pay. I would not care if he scared the brat into a fit, and put an end to her, but I must play the part of a friend to keep a hold on Alice. I must disabuse her of that notion that *I* wish to do harm to her child."

He ran around the house, entered the front door, and saw Mrs. Layton flying up the stairs pale as death, and Dr. Bland following her as rapidly as his years and weight permitted. The old man was looking furious and excited, and as Crimin passed him, he gaspingly said:

"For God's sake, go up there and stop that madman, or he may do something dreadful. He ought to be in a lunatic asylum."

Crimin sprang up the steps two at a jump, and reached the head of the stairs to see his cousin standing with his inflamed and glaring eyes fixed on his wife, who had sunk down at his feet, clasping his knees, and was brokenly entreating him to come away and leave her child to repose.

Layton was trying to draw something from his breast, but his unsteady hands refused to serve him, and he was uttering a volume of imprecations terrible to hear.

Crimin was beside him in a moment, grasping his hands in both of his own, and he cried out:

"Get out of his sight, for God's sake, Alice, or he may do you some terrible hurt. He shall not go in here, I promise you. I will take him away as soon as possible."

"But I won't go till I've seen Lucia, and heard what Bland says of her," screamed the madman. "She is my child, and I have the right to see her. I sent for the doctor, and he has never come to report her condition to me. Get out of my way, or I—I'll kill you both!"

He spurned his kneeling wife with his foot, and made an effort to grapple with Crimin, but Dr. Bland came up at that moment, and after assisting Mrs. Layton to arise, he fixed his eyes sternly on the inflamed orbs of Layton, and said, in a commanding tone:

"I will not permit this noise at the door of my patient's room. If you value your child's life, Mr. Layton, you will cease this unseemly uproar, and come quietly away with your cousin and myself."

"Is—is the child in any danger?" faltered Layton, the purple flush on his face perceptibly paling. "It was a bad fall, but her arm wasn't broken—"

"No; it was badly sprained: but the child's system received a nervous shock, and I placed her under the influence of a sleeping potion. How much good do you think it will do her if you make such a noise as this at her door?"

"I—I must see her, if only for a moment," he said, speaking calmly and collectedly. "I—I am not in one of my spells yet, Doctor, but I am afraid I am on the verge of one. I—I've been going it rather fast of late, but you can help me to get right again. Just make them open this door, and I'll only go in and look at Lucia. I—I want to know for myself that she's all right."

Mrs. Layton had flitted to a door at the further end of the hall which opened into a room that communicated with the one in which her daughter lay. She found the child sitting up with scared eyes and panting breath, and Cassy crouching beside her in mortal dread lest her master should effect an entrance.

Dr. Bland's voice called on her to unlock the door, and she hastily motioned to the nurse to conceal herself in the next room, lest the fury of her husband should vent itself upon her.

The woman quickly obeyed, glad to escape the notice of the man who had more than once struck her with brutal violence.

The door was then thrown open, and Layton came in with unsteady steps, attended on either side by Dr. Bland and Crimin. When she saw him, Lucia cried out, and hid her face in the pillow.

"Do 'way; you hurt me. I 'ont look at you. I hate you, you ole tipsy, bad man."

Layton raised his unsteady hand and shook it menacingly toward his wife, as he cried out, in tones hoarse with rage:

"See the effect of *her* training! Hear how she has taught her child to revile me, and I the master of this house—the owner of broad lands and innumerable slaves. That woman there, fair as her face is, has been the curse of my life, Dr. Bland. She married me because I was rich. She cared more for another man than she did for me. She will not dare to deny it."

"But I do deny it," said Alice indignantly. "I was but a child when you married me, just from school, and you were the first and only man that ever spoke a word of love to me. How then could you have had a rival?"

"*I had one*, and you know it, in spite of your innocent look. A boy and girl love is often stronger than any passion awakened in mature life, and such a one you cannot deny existed between you and Guy Preston."

"Guy! Why, I have not heard from, or thought of him scarcely, for six years. We were a pair of silly children once, but I had no more love for him when I married you than if he had never existed."

"I have been informed of all, Mrs. Layton," he replied, with drunken gravity, "and I'll not have a heart at second-hand. You may go back to your father, and tell him that you were an—an imposition. This is no longer your home, Madam. I have borne with your tantrums long enough, and it is time for me to assert my own dignity. Layton is no longer a home for you."

A gleam of joy shot over the face lately so sad, and she briefly said:

"Give me my child, and I will go."

"She shall decide between us," said Layton, moving unsteadily toward the bed, "and if she does not decide right, it will be the worst day's work for her that she is ever likely to do."

Lucia cried out, and shrank down among the pillows, as she saw her father approaching, and Dr. Bland hastened to interpose between them, and say:

"The child is in no condition to be further excited, Mr. Layton. If you value her life, you will leave her to be quieted by her mother, for she greatly needs repose."

"Ah, bah! don't talk doctor's jargon to me. I know what it all means. Lucia shall choose between her mother and myself, now and here. Ho! picaninny; see what I've got to show you. Look at papa's watch, and see how you'd like to have it for your own. If you are good to me, I am going to give it to you, little pet."

The child, thus appealed to, peeped out from under her dishevelled curls, and looked with longing eyes on the gold repeater that was dangled within a few inches of her face. To grasp this wonderful treasure in her own hands had long been the desire of her heart; her father often tantalized her with it, but never before had it been held within actual reach of her hand.

"If she takes the watch, she stays with me, and thus she will show, even in her babyhood, that she prefers gold to the love her mother can give her as her only portion. You will abide by the test, Mrs. Layton;" and he glanced, with a sneer, toward his pallid wife.

"She is too young to make a choice of such importance to herself," faltered Alice. "Give her to me till she is seven years of age, and then she can decide which parent she will stay with."

"And let *you* tutor her in the mean time to hate and despise *me*. No, thank you. She elects her destiny now, and she either remains here as my heiress, or she is cast out forever with yourself, with but a pittance on which to maintain life."

"Even the last is better than the fate she would meet with here," said the white lips of the poor mother, who was in mortal dread lest her child should be deluded into stretching out her baby hand and grasping the toy she had so long coveted.

In that event, she knew that Lucia would be withheld from her remorselessly—that she would not be allowed to remain near her, or interfere with the child's management in any way, for the decree of separation so lightly spoken by Layton she knew to be final.

Through the machinations of his cousin he had become utterly alienated from her, and the last blow had been given by the cunning Mephistopheles when he infused into Layton's mind the belief that another man lived who had always been preferred before him.

Alice cast a wild glance toward Dr. Bland, and he motioned to her to place herself where her child could see her, and await the result of the experiment about to be made. In Layton's condition, nothing else was to be done except to humor him in the fancy he had taken.

The little girl who was the centre of such absorbing interest, slowly raised her head and gazed with eager eyes on the watch. It could play several airs, and her father touched the spring that started a lively waltz. The little hands began to tremble, though she made no effort to put them out, fearing, if she did so, that the object of her childish adoration would be jerked away from her, as it had so often been before when she made an effort to grasp it.

Layton impatiently said:

"Don't you understand, little stupid? You may have this pretty toy for your very own, to do with it as you please, if you will stay with papa, and be his little girl."

The child made a spring forward as if to clutch it, and her mother uttered a cry of despair, for it seemed to her that her darling was about to consummate her own inevitable destruction by choosing, however ignorantly, to remain where her most deadly foe would have the entire control of her future fate.

At the sound of her mother's voice, Lucia looked toward her; something in her face appealed to the instincts of the infant with overwhelming power; she dropped her hand, by this time half outstretched, and in shrill baby tones, cried out:

"Let me do to my mamma. I don' want your ole watch, bad pa—hurt me din—I *'ont* have it."

Alice fell on her knees, returning silent thanks to God, and Layton uttered an oath so loud and startling that even Crimin shuddered.

"Take her," he said, turning to his discarded wife. "She is no true daughter of yours, or she would never have turned from a golden bait; but such as she is, you are welcome to keep her. I shall make my will, and disinherit her. You shall have an allowance of five hundred dollars on which to keep her and yourself, and that is all I will ever give either of you."

"I will make it suffice," said Alice, rising and speaking with dignity. "You have treated me very badly, Mr. Layton, but I forgive you all, in consideration of what you have done to-day. Let me go unmolested with my child and her nurse, and I cannot only forgive, but pray for you to Him who can change and soften even hearts as hard as yours."

"Go to the demon with your prayers," he angrily replied. "None of them will make me change my purpose toward you and that puling brat yonder."

CHAPTER IV.

FAREWELL TO LAYTON.

For a few brief moments Alice Layton was supremely happy in the certainty that she was to be permitted to leave the house which had become a dreary prison to her, taking with her the darling child that was her only consolation under the evils of her lot.

She had struggled, she had suffered as few women could without breaking down utterly in mind and body, but she was still strong and elastic; for the man who had used every effort to crush her, and render her desperate, had never possessed the subtle power to wound her inmost soul, as would have been the case had she loved him with all her heart and all her strength.

She had submitted to the parental decree which gave her to Layton as his wife, believing that because she felt no repulsion toward him, she could learn to love him; and had he been tender with her, kind to her, her heart would have gone out to him long ago. He had made no effort to win her; he had repelled her, insulted her and trampled on her with remorseless cruelty, and she fervently thanked God for the opportunity to escape from the wretched thraldom in which she had so long lived.

That some treachery on Crimin's part had brought this sudden crisis in her fate she fully understood, but she pardoned him for it in consideration of the service his ill offices had so unexpectedly rendered her.

He had stood beside his cousin watching the scene, and helping to sustain the unsteady form of the intoxicated man, and when Layton declared his intention to disinherit his daughter, the triumphant expression of a successful demon came into his dark face.

"Come with me, Crim," said the master of the house, as he turned away from the bed. "I have renounced my incumbrances, and you and I will lead a rare life in the old house after we are rid of them."

Nothing loth, Crimin helped him toward the door, and as he was about to leave the room, Layton turned his head, and said:

"I give you two hours in which to pack up and decamp, Madam. Leave nothing belonging to you in my house, for you shall never return to it under any pretext. Your presence has long been odious to me, and I am but too happy to rid myself of it forever. As to the child, I disown her from this hour. Let her cling to you in your poverty. She was born to high estate and great wealth, but neither shall now be hers, since I have it in my power to deprive her of them."

"I will leave your house within the time named," said Alice calmly, "and so long as you remain its master I shall have no wish to reënter it. I would have been to you all that a wife could, but you elected to cast me aside, and make a bosom-friend of the worst enemy you possess. Now you will be left to his tender mercies alone, and may Heaven have compassion on you, for he will have none. As to my child, I shall live for her, labor for her if it is necessary, and rear her in purity and peace. These are my last words to you, Edward Layton, till we both meet at that bar where a just God will judge between us."

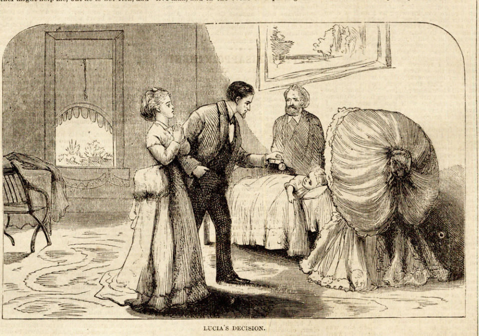
She sunk on her knees beside the bed, and buried her face in the pillows. Could a glance have killed, the lurid flash that came from Crimin's eyes would have annihilated her, but she did not see it, though Dr. Bland did; and he felt assured that in this man Alice Layton had an implacable enemy, who would be unscrupulous in the means used to avenge himself for the words she had so imprudently uttered.

Layton and his cousin left the room, and after a pause, the physician said:

"I cannot go away and leave you here, Mrs. Layton. You and your child must come with me to my house till Lucia is well enough to travel. My wife will make you welcome, and be as kind to you as if you were her own daughter. The sooner we get away the better, for you and for her. No one knows how soon a drunken man may change his mind, and Mr. Layton may yet revoke his permission to you to go away and take your child with you."

Alice sprang up paler than before, if possible, her eyes shining with a wild fear.

"You are right, Doctor. I have no time now to indulge in bitter and vain regrets. I must be up and doing. I have been ordered from my husband's house, and I will lose no time in leaving it. I must ask you to go down and tell Ben. to get the close carriage ready for my use. Lucia's cradle bed can be placed in it, and we can take her on that without



LUCIA'S DECISION.

suffering to her. Cassy and I will pack up what I intend to take with me, and one of the men must have the spring wagon in readiness to take my trunks."

Dr. Bland nodded.

"I will attend to it. Your mind seems clear enough as to what is to be done, and I am sure you will be prompt enough in execution."

"Yes; as long as I have anything to *do*, I can sustain myself even under such a complication of wretchedness as this. I cannot think it *wrong* for me to take Mr. Layton at his word, Dr. Bland?"

"Wrong! no indeed. You will be guilty of a great wrong to yourself and your child, if you do not avail yourself of the opportunity to escape when it is offered you. Get away before some new freak seizes on the mind of that unfortunate man. If Crimin's influence is thrown in against your departure, you will not be permitted to go."

"I believe that; but he wishes me away. After what took place just now, he will feel secure that the inheritance of my daughter will become his at the death of Mr. Layton. I sacrifice her worldly interests by taking her away; but in so doing, I firmly believe I save her life."

"There, there, my dear child, do not speak so freely of one who may yet have great power to serve, or to injure you. I am going now to see about the carriages, and you and Cassy must not dawdle over your preparations for departure."

He left the room, and Alice turned to her child, over whom Cassy was bending with tears in her eyes. She had ventured into the room as soon as Layton left it, and she now said:

"Is it all true, Miss Ally? Must we go 'way, and give up everything that 'longs to you and to my pretty pet?"

"Nothing belongs to me, Cassy, but you, my jewels and my clothes. Let us pack up the last as rapidly as possible, and do you gather your things together when that is done. I have but one wish now, to get away from here as speedily as possible."

The child, in spite of the late excitement in the room, had again fallen into a quiet sleep, and the mistress and maid were not impeded in their movements by the necessity of looking after her. In less than an hour two large trunks were packed, and a smaller one containing the wardrobe of the little girl.

Cassy then left her mistress that she might attend to her own affairs, and Alice sat down with a strange feeling of hardness in her heart. She looked around at the sumptuous home she was leaving, and not one thrill of regret caused her to shrink from parting with all this splendor. To her this magnificent home had been but a scene of humiliation and suffering, and if a Lethean draught could have been proffered to her lips which would have given her forgetfulness of the four last years of her life, she would gladly have accepted it, and blotted from her memory all that shameful record.

She was going forth now to comparative poverty, but her courage arose to face it, and her heart was almost light as she felt that the heavy yoke she had so long borne was slipping from her shoulders.

Lucia slept on, unconscious of the great change in her destiny which the last few hours had made. An heiress in the morning, a disinherited child at sunset; a wide gulf had opened between her past and her future; but the pale woman who knelt and prayed beside her with words of fervent power, asking for help and guidance in the thorny path that lay before her, allowed not one regret for all her child had given up to cling to her. Only by this sacrifice could she be saved from the power of the kinsman who was her most deadly foe, and Alice shrank and quivered before the dread of what Crimin might yet do to persecute and annoy her, when the power to do so passed into his hands.

Ah! well she might shrink, for even her fears fell far short of the turpitude her enemy would be guilty of when that time came.

A noise at the door aroused her to the consciousness of what was passing around her, and Alice arose and opened it, to find Crimin standing in the hall. He looked paler than usual, and was evidently putting a strong constraint upon himself as he coldly addressed her:

"After the uncalled for insult you offered me this afternoon, you hardly expected me to seek you again, Alice, but I cannot let you go away from Layton with the belief that I am an enemy either to you or your husband. I scarcely expected such injustice from *you*, for I have stood your friend, and shielded you many times from a madman's rage, when it would have gone hard with you if I had not done so."

"That is true, and I thank you for it; but you could have done no less, James, when you yourself had tempted Mr. Layton to drink till he became dangerous to all around him, save yourself. The influence you possess over him might have been used to save; it has only been used to destroy. You cannot deny this; neither can you deny that you have stood as a barrier between my husband and myself, alienating him from me, and inciting him to violence, that you might play the part of protector. Only this day you have told him a base falsehood, to arouse his fury against me; from you alone could have come that fabrication concerning Guy Preston."

Crimin's face underwent many changes while she thus spoke, and he viciously gnawed at his under lip till blood nearly came from it. But he spoke quite calmly in reply:

"You overrate my influence with Ned. I could not have arrested him in his downward career if I had tried. He contracted evil habits while in Paris, and you know that *you* were powerless to win him from them. Why then should you suppose that *I* could do so?"

"In time I could have done it, had you not come as his evil fate, to destroy the influence I was slowly gaining over him. I think I could have made him a good man; you have made him a demon."

Her voice broke down, though her courage did not fail her. With a sneer, Crimin retorted:

"To make Layton a saint would have been to accomplish a miracle indeed. You accuse me, yet I have been a never-failing friend to you. I warned your father of the fate in store for you as the wife of Edward Layton, but he was too much dazzled by the worldly advantages of the marriage to listen to me. I came hither to protect you from the insane violence of which I knew your husband to be guilty in his drinking spells; and last, but not least, when I saw that you could no longer live in his house with any safety to yourself, I told him that old story about your childish preference for young Preston, and prompted him to act as he has done, thus affording you the opportunity to escape from his tyranny which you so ardently yearned for. Do you think now that I have been your friend, or your enemy, Alice?"

"As you state it, one would believe that you were actuated by friendly motives; but I *know* and *feel* that it is not so. A monitor that will not be silenced warns me that in you I and my child possess a deadly enemy. Many would think me imprudent to speak thus to a man who has so much in his power as you have; but it is better, in my opinion, to have a declared enemy, than one who wears the mask of friendship but to stab more securely from behind it."

Again that deadly gleam came into his eyes, but he cast them down to prevent her from reading their expression, and after a pause, asked:

"Are you not afraid to beard me thus, if you really think that I can rule your husband? What is to prevent me from inducing him to recall you to your duties? or, failing that, to keep with him the child you are so wrapped up in? After the terrible insinuation you uttered not long since, as to her safety here, I should be justified in asking Ned to retain Lucia, that I may prove to the world how deeply I am interested in her welfare."

The vailed threat conveyed in his words drove the poor mother to desperation. She clasped her hands over the heart that had been so cruelly outraged, and cried, in excited tones:

"You dare not attempt that. If you did, I think I should have nerve to kill you. What! do you think that I would ever abandon my helpless baby to *your* tender mercies? Left here, *you* would rule her fate, and a terrible one it would be. She would be in your way, James Crimin, if her father changed his mind concerning her, but if I take her with me, he will carry out his vindictive purpose, and leave her nothing. I accept poverty for her, for myself, and all I ask of you is to let us go in peace."

"You are very violent, Mrs. Layton, and not over-courteous in your expressions, but I can forgive you, knowing as I do how deep a mortification it must be, to as proud a woman as you are, to meet with such a downfall as has come to you. Your life has thus far been a failure, but it need not always remain one. You hate and mistrust me now, but the day will come in which I can prove to you that I am ready to be your best friend; till that time, I reserve my right to withhold from you the motives which have actuated me in my intercourse with yourself and your husband. That they were not unfriendly, you will then know; indeed you should feel now that they are not so, for I have no intention to interfere with you in any way. I have placed my cousin under the influence of a powerful narcotic, that you may get away in safety with the child. He was in such a state of furious excitement after he left this room, that I feared something dreadful might happen if he was conscious at the time of your departure."

Alice shuddered, and with effort said:

"For this I thank you, and I would give a great deal if I dared to trust you. I am going with Dr. Bland, and shall stay at his house till Lucia can travel with safety; then I shall go to Maryland to my father."

"And your parents—your step-mother? what will *she* say to the sudden collapse of your brilliant prospects?" he asked.

"She will blame *me*, of course. She will think that I ought to have endured everything, sooner than give up my husband and my home. But papa will be kind to me, and with him I shall be safe from such persecutions as I have endured under this roof."

"Poor girl! your lot has indeed been a hard one," said Crimin, affecting a sigh. "Alice, you *may* trust me; I swear it to you. I will guard the interests of your child; no will shall be made if I can prevent it. She is the lawful heiress to Layton, and as such she shall yet be recognized. In your exile think of me as working in her interests, and your feelings may, perhaps, soften toward me. I only ask for justice at your hands. The day may come when you will be grateful for the efforts I will make to serve you."

He seized her hand, and before she was aware of his intention, he stooped forward and kissed her on her forehead. She flushed deeply, and drew herself haughtily away, but Crimin did not stay to face her displeasure. Before she could speak he was half-way down the stairs, and as he went he muttered:

"That kiss was only on your brow; the next shall be upon your lips, my pretty tigress; and it shall be given, aye, and returned too, to my betrothed wife. Flutter, struggle as you will, my hand is on your fate, fair Alice, and only in death shall its grasp relax. Escape from *me*, when you fly from your husband to-day? Ha, ha! I only allow you to go, to make you more surely mine in the good time to come."

He went back to his own apartment, to which he had taken Layton, and found him sleeping profoundly from the combined effects of opium and brandy.

The tempter who had been mainly instrumental in bringing him to this wretched pass, looked down upon his victim with supreme scorn, and his lip curled disdainfully as he muttered:

"What a besotted brute he is! He has thrown away all his chances, and lies there now a broken down wreck, destined to fill an early grave. What would the old man say now, if he could rise from the dead and see how his heir has abused the prosperity he was so anxious to secure to him? *My* claims were as good as his, but they were ignored that a Layton might rule in the old home, with lavish wealth at his command. Well, he has done it; and what has he brought the name to? He has dragged it in the mire; debased himself below humanity; and all at *my* bidding. If *I* had let him alone, he would have vegetated on like the old fogies that have gone before him; but I took him in hand, taught him what life is worth, and, my faith! he has got through with it as fast as even *I* could wish. The pace he 'll go, now that he has cast off all trammels, will soon bring him to the end; the sooner the better for me."

His reverie was interrupted by a tap on the door, and Dr. Bland came in. He said:

"I thought it best to look into Mr. Layton's condition before I leave. Ah, he is quiet, I see. I feared he would increase his bad symptoms by drinking again, but you have had the good judgment to give him a sleeping potion."

"Yes; I wished Alice to get away quietly with the child, and to effect that, the only course was to put him to sleep. I had to dose him pretty heavily, Doctor, but I hardly think it will hurt him."

"On the contrary, it will do him good, by staving off the attack of delirium with which he was threatened. What a shame it is, that a man like that should be brought to such a pass as this!"

Crimin shrugged his shoulders, and cynically said:

"What could be expected but ruin and disgrace, when the reins were thrown into the hands of a self-indulgent, reckless young fellow? I thought his marriage would save him, but you see what *that* has ended in. The great wealth he inherited has only been a snare and temptation to him."

Dr. Bland only said in reply:

"His physical health might be perfectly restored yet, if he would be guided by me. Layton is a man of magnificent physique. If you could induce him to give up his bad habits, he would live for many years, and—"

"I have no power to control him," interrupted Crimin. "If I could, I would have done so for the sake of his wife and child. I hope, Dr. Bland, that you do not believe the common gossip which accuses me of driving my cousin on in the wretched course he has run? You must have seen enough for yourself to convince you that I have done nothing of the kind. Ned Layton is a law unto himself, as no one ought to know better than you. If I had attempted to interfere with him, I should have been driven from his house, and poor Alice have been left utterly at his mercy."

Dr. Bland coldly replied:

"I am not sitting up in judgment on you, Mr. Crimin; so your explanation is uncalled for. Perhaps if Mrs. Layton had been left to solve her own difficulties, the result might have been less tragic than it threatens to be at present. Your cousin is a doomed man unless some power is brought to bear upon him which will persuade or compel him to return to the path of soberness. If you really have any regard for him, you will make some effort toward saving him."

"Why, what can *I* do? I am not a missionary; and if I was, my exhortations would be wasted on deaf ears. I thought you too sensible a man to expect impossibilities, Dr. Bland."

"I expect nothing from you, sir," said the doctor curtly. "This unfortunate man will 'die as the fool dieth,' and I cannot see how it is to be prevented. It is dreadful to think that one of God's creatures can deliberately bring himself to such a pass as this. If he can be induced to pause now, Mr. Crimin, there is a chance that he may be restored both mentally and physically. If not, his sentence is written."

"I have already told you, sir, that I cannot undertake to reform him," replied Crimin coldly. "It would be but a waste of time for any one to attempt so quixotic a performance. Layton has gone to the bad as utterly as any man can; and what is worse, he has no taste for or appreciation of the good: witness his treatment to his wife to-day."

Dr. Bland shook his head drearily, felt the pulse of his patient, gave some directions, and nodding curtly to Crimin, went out in search of Alice.

He found her at the side entrance to which the vehicles had been ordered, that the bustle of departure might not reach Layton's ears. When told that he was sleeping, she said hurriedly:

"Come, Doctor; let us get away from this house as soon as possible. I cannot feel that Lucia is safe till she is far away from here."

The sun was setting as they drove through the gate, and the old house was thrown out in brilliant relief against the sky, but Alice Layton cast back no glance of regret at the walls which had witnessed the misery and humiliation of her wedded life.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HETTY'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

BY HATTIE KYLE.

Hetty Leeds looked with regretful eyes at her bonnet of home-made straw—not that its generous proportions did not suit her, though they would scarcely delight a modern belle—not that it was not snowily bleached, or deftly sewn—but that a yard or so of ribbon was wanting to its completeness.

The spot she lived in was a sleepy little town in the heart of the hills, where sound of steam whistle had never penetrated, and whose inhabitants lived as primitive a life as our forefathers of Revolutionary memory. Their garments were woven, dyed and made in each individual household; the journeyman shoemaker paid them a visit once a year, leaving a stock behind sufficient to last until his return; even the hats and bonnets were made of the native straw, woven, sewed and pressed by the hands of the women folk.

What wonder Hetty was in despair; if she had had a fortune at her command, there were no stores within a stone's throw, but miles of weary stage ride between her and the nearest one. And the coveted ribbon she had once possessed; that was the bitterest reflection of all.

It was Hetty Leeds' unhappy fate to live on sufferance, for the people with whom her life was spent were only so nearly related that they would not see her starve, not nearly enough to give her ever so little of the sweet home love that makes life precious.

But the good old farmer who was her adopted father was very kind to her in his way, and when his girls had their summer bonnets made and bleached, he brought from town the ribbon wherewith to trim them, and Hetty had her parcel as well as the rest.

A bright, pure blue, just like the sky of a clear, cloudless day. She drew the silken loveliness through her fingers, rejoicing in the luxurious, delicate softness of the strip of cerulean lutestring.

But when Maria, who had a taste in millinery, had drawn her ribbon across the straw and fastened it with a stitch, she must needs have a bow at the side before she could be quite suited.

Maria could coax very prettily when she would, and before Hetty was quite aware what she had done, she had been beguiled of her newly acquired treasure, and received instead a promise of another just as fine when "pa" went to town.

So, when the returning stage brought the good farmer home, the girl stood waiting with sparkling eyes, indulging in pleasing fancies that the ribbon might turn out to be pink this time, which color she rather preferred to blue; or that possibly there might be enough to admit of a bow at the side, like Maria's.

Whatever thoughts were in Hetty's mind, she held her peace while the farmer had his supper and related the news of the day; waited patiently while he smoked his evening pipe on the porch; but when he arose with a yawn, so announcing his intention of retiring for the night, she pulled Maria's sleeve gently, and reminded her that her father had not yet unpocketed his purchase.

Maria's blank countenance betrayed her before she had opened her lips. Satisfied with her own millinery achievements, she had totally forgotten her promise.

There was nothing to be done. The disappointed girl went to her own room and wept out her bitterness. The grand picnic to the Elm Woods was to take place in two days. Her pretty blue and white calico was folded away for the occasion. There it lay, looking fresh and bright as need be, but all to no purpose. She could not go without a bonnet; a bonnet could not be worn without trimming; and, in tearful despair, Hetty laid her head on the window sill, and so sat till the moon had risen, and the thought of to-morrow's duties warned her to rest.

She rose in a happier mood. A faint hope had dawned within her breast that last year's trimming might be made to look almost as good as new. There were no idle hands in the household. For mere subsistence, clothing, food and shelter, all must toil day in and day out. A Saturday afternoon ramble was a rare treat, and a whole day given over to pleasure, a thing to be looked forward to for weeks. Among these busy ones, Hetty was the busiest; yet, late in the forenoon, she stole a few moments to try her experiment.

Knowledge of chemistry was not one of Hetty's strong points, and, when the faded pink ribbon acquired faint streaks of green from its contact with the soapy water, she was more surprised than pleased. But she patted and rubbed it and got ready her flatiron, hoping, poor child! that the ugly marks would not show so plainly when they were dry.

Then came a step outside on the porch, and Walter Weir's curly head intruded at the kitchen window. The adventurous laundress gave a nervous start. Down came the hot iron, crisping the pink ribbon into little wrinkles and searing it with a great brown mark. Truly absurd it looked now, and Hetty thrust it into her pocket in a little, crumpled heap, and went forward with the best grace she could muster to hear what her visitor might have to say.

Oh, bitter, bitter mysteries of human life! Here was the very thing that had seemed the acme of delight, the thing that she had only dared to dream of afar off, laid at her feet, and she could not stoop to take it. Walter Weir had singled her out for his companion on the festive day that was coming.

Was it only that he was the lion of the occasion, an honored guest, a young man who had made his way in the great world beyond the hills? Was it that there were strifes and envyings already in the girl world of Monticello, in prospect of this very honor?

Was it only this that made her heart throb, first with pleasure that he had asked her, then with pain that she must answer "No," then with shame that she could say no word to make him understand her reason?

The mingled joy and grief and trouble made the little waiting minute seem an age to Hetty Leeds.

"I think you had better ask some one else," she stammered out.

She had not meant to say it, but somehow the words slipped from her tongue. She only meant that he was a visitor, and worthy of all courtesy; that though she refused him, she did not intend to be rude; that any other girl would accept his escort with pleasure; and she was aware that she had made a sad bungle of her polite speech.

She remembered, in her confusion, that she had not told him she must stay at home. But what did it matter? she asked herself. She could not tell him why. It would be like saying that these people she lived with were unkind to her. She wished in her inmost heart that he could know how glad she was that he had asked her, but that she could not tell him either, so went back to her work with flushed cheeks, and swallowed her tears, while Walter Weir strode off in a sulky fashion.

In the course of the day, Hetty learned that he had invited Maria, who, nothing loth, accepted the invitation, though she had already given her promise to a certain George Hildreth; but the hero of the day was not to be refused, and George Hildreth could be put off with Hetty's company, if necessary, or somehow it must be managed. Such were Maria's secret reflections.

When the all-important day arrived, and the discovery was made that Hetty could not accompany the party, affairs assumed a more complicated complexion; but still the little schemer trusted to her native tact and readiness to extricate herself from the dilemma.

The busiest days were over—the harvest well-nigh gathered in. It was a holiday for old and young; and there was a pang in poor little Hetty's heart when she saw the gay party moving away, the faithless Maria already whispering and laughing with Walter Weir, while George Hildreth strove in vain to conceal his hurt vanity under a lively exterior.

Such a wicked feeling came across her as she watched them! No one had cared that she was left behind. The farmer had asked her in an off-hand way why it was, but she was too well trained to make accusations against a daughter of the house. If any one gave her a passing thought, they fancied that she was not well, or unsociable perhaps. And some one had whispered—it was not meant for her ears, but she had heard it—that no one had asked her company, and that she was sulky.

They were gone. Hetty had worn her blue calico, but she went into the house and changed it for a work-a-day jacket and skirt of less delicate hue; then, with a sudden under current of elation, she recalled the fact that she was free for the day, and slipped down a little by-path to a pretty pond filled with green rushes.

She flung herself down in the long grass on its banks, threw her arms above her head with a sigh of relief, and burst into a passion of weeping, then sobered into thought, while the sky-depths smiled their ineffable love into her sorrowful little heart.

Always to be set apart and despised, always the one that was not missed—that was the burden of her thoughts. But through her cloud of trouble one little joy shone like a star. *He* had asked her. Could it have been because he was sorry for her? Out of pity? Yes, she was sure of it. Surely any one would rather have taken Maria.

"But if ever, in time to come, any one should love me, I could be a better wife than Maria. I could make him glad with my love."

She had almost uttered the words aloud. A wind startled the rushes, and she rose with a flutter in her breast, half ashamed of her own thoughts, half fearful of some unseen presence. It almost seemed to her as if the sky and the water and the rushes might read her secret—a secret only half known to her own timid heart.

Some one had stolen through the grass and lifted her chestnut braids with a gentle hand, and she turned and looked into Walter Weir's eyes. Afterward she thought of the untidy dress and the blown hair, with its little willful ringlets, but then only that he was there, that he had taken her hands in his, and was looking deep, deep down into her eyes. Her lashes fell. The crimson crept up to the silken fringes, and oh! the glory of heaven was in that timid, trembling breast.

Then his question. As though he had come to judgment, he asked her why she was there alone, and out came the bare, honest truth; but not a word about Maria. She told herself she was not mean enough for that.

"And I thought you were going with some one else," he said.

She looked up in new surprise at his tone, and somehow in that moment the secret was told—the secret of two fresh young hearts that had given to each other the wealth of their first youth and freshness.

"Will you be my little wife, my little Hetty? Will you let me take you far away from here?"

It seemed to her that was all she could ask of earthly bliss, and she laid her head on his shoulder and nestled close, close in his arms, those arms that seemed strong enough to shield her from trouble for evermore, against the great heart that could give her all the love and tenderness her hungry one had waited for so long.

In the hush of the lonely meadows they talked of many things. First, of how George Hildreth had asserted his prior claims, and Walter Weir, glad to be free, had yielded with a good grace, making it his apology and Maria's as well, that he was a stranger, and then had stolen back to find his little love. Somehow the blown hair did not trouble her so much when he had taken the tiny spirals lovingly, tenderly in his fingers, nor the untidy dress when he had kissed its folds.

The setting sun found them still hand in hand beside the reed-filled pond; and ere the bright summer days were over, they had started on their life-long journey side by side. So ended Hetty's disappointment.

A THREE MONTHS' CAMPAIGN.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"Just three months ago to-day, the eighteenth of September, since she came to Farmlands; only thirteen short weeks since I first saw her, and I verily believe I am in love—hopelessly."

But whether his passion were fraught with, or doomed to success or despair, John Clifford certainly looked very little like a "hopeless" lover, as he sat coolly smoking, and thinking about Isabel De Lorme. His was a bright face, though not handsome, and lighted by laughing blue eyes that Miss De Lorme never yet had satisfactorily decided were in fun or earnest when their owner flashed their light upon her.

He was an independent, gentlemanly fellow, who would be, and was—for he condescended daily to it—graceful under all circumstances; turning over Miss De Lorme's music in the evening, in his mother's parlor, or swinging the scythe in the fragrant meadows, with his snow-white shirt sleeves rolled to his elbows, and his fine frank face all aglow with the healthful exercise.

He was his widowed mother's only son, her one child, and Mrs. Clifford worshipped him—so good, so kind, so caressingly protecting was he to the "little mother," whose one possession—the large, delightful farm-house, replete with real country luxuries, and furnished from the attic, where the rafters hung full of sweet-smelling dried herbs, to the cellar, where were methodically ranged the dozens of pans of cream and milk, in true housewifely style—Mrs. Clifford had turned into a lucrative means of subsistence by opening a summer boarding-house, while John superintended the farm and affairs monetary.

Now John Clifford was twenty-six, and no face had ever disturbed the even tenor of his way until this Isabel De Lorme—this witching girl with the ebon-black eyes, and brows, lashes and hair of intensest darkness, and complexion of purest paleness, and lips of vividest scarlet—had come to his mother's house, and won all hearts under the roof before she had been there a week. Only three months acquainted, and John Clifford could have sworn it seemed like so many years, so thoroughly did they feel acquainted, such perfect friends they two had become, despite that tall, aristocratic blonde gentleman from New York who sat next Isabel at table, and who frowned so *audibly* when John would bend over her regal head and whisper something of import to her.

And sitting there on the little back piazza, where he was almost sure he would not be disturbed, he had to smile with superb indifference when he thought of this blonde gentleman, this Mr. Elmer Elmer, whose admiration for his peerless Isabel was so patent.

To be sure, Mr. Elmer and Isabel had been carrying on a harmless little flirtation, off and on, all summer; but John hadn't said anything, for two good reasons: one was, he was not a declared lover of Miss De Lorme, much as he would have liked to be; the other, that he had had just as nice a little time with Addie Sunderland between times, when he took a notion to stroll off to the Sunderland farm-house, only a couple of miles up the turnpike.

He and Addie had known each other ever since John could remember, which perhaps accounted for the reason he did not properly appreciate her and her rare sweet beauty. And then, with Addie two miles off, and Isabel constantly before his eyes—with Addie, when he did see her, in plainest of muslin toilets, perhaps *demi-dishabille*, and helping her mother in the arduous duties of a farm kitchen, and Isabel flashing before his eyes in such wondrously bewitching dresses, such miracles of style and grace and beauty, it was little wonder that he grew to forgetting Addie Sunderland's peach-bloom cheeks, hair like spun gold, and eyes as dark, but not so brilliant, as Isabel De Lorme's own.

Eyes they were too, that of late had learned to lighten and hide under the warm blue-veined lids at the sound of John Clifford's footsteps—eyes that, still later, since the summer had begun to wane, had wept out her heart's secret grief up in her dear, homely, cozy little room, with its one latticed window that looked down on the chimneys of Farmlands.

For John Clifford was fast forgetting her; and that elegant lady from the South had won him whom she had wanted so for her very own.

Poor, foolish little Addie! but she was only seventeen, and in love, else she would have risen up and met and vanquished her foe; for her own weapons, her feminine tact, beauty, wit and grace, were sharp and bright as her enemy's, only her enemy was an expert in their use, and Addie was—well, only just the truest, sweetest girl in the country side.

The lights were flaring and flaming brightly in Mrs. Clifford's parlor, that chilly September night, and the little groups gathered together—one beside the grate, where a light fire had been kindled; another at the open piano; some by the bay-window—were unusually disinclined for conversation. It had been a delightful season, and on the morrow their pleasant party would be broken up, in all probability never to meet again. A dozen or more of Mrs. Clifford's guests were to leave on the morning boat, and among them, Isabel De Lorme.

And yet John Clifford had not spoken; but to-night, when he looked across the hall into the little sewing-room his mother had given to Isabel for a sort of private reception room, and saw her standing by the window, silent, thoughtful, alone, so queenly in her attitude of grace, so beautiful in her black silk dress, golden ornaments, and a white soft shawl around her shoulders, he suddenly laid aside the book of engravings he had been looking at, not seeing, and walked into her presence, resolving to ask her to stay and be his wife, or to go his betrothed bride. She turned, with a bright smile, and held out her hand.

"I believe I was certainly getting lonely. Are you ever lonely, Mr. Clifford?"

She flashed him a glance from her radiant eyes as she spoke; and with the hand John was not still holding, carelessly, but with a matchless grace that did not escape her lover's ardent, admiring gaze, swept back a rich stray curl off her forehead.

How liquidly tender her voice was! And John Clifford wondered if his destiny had created this opportunity for his especial good?

Now the laughing, saucy gleam was gone from his own eyes, and in its stead was a gravity so intense that Isabel almost shrank before it.

"You ask me if I am ever lonely," he said, in a low, murmurous tone, that was intoxicating in its sweetness and proud strength, that grew passionate as he went on; "as if I could be, when I have had you near me; as if I ever would be with you. Isabel, you will not go and leave me desolate? Isabel, my own darling! my own beautiful darling!"

Then, without waiting for an answer, satisfied in that he had told her all his heart, as it behooved him to do, John Clifford caught her in his arms, held her in a tight embrace, the while raining kisses he could not withhold on her splendid face, on her warm, quivering lips. Then he held her at arm's length and smiled down on her.

"My own! I knew I had but to tell you, and—"

But she was shivering strangely; he saw her white fingers with their gleam of jewels twining and intertwining; he saw her mouth parted to speak, and he stopped suddenly.

"Mr. Clifford—oh, Mr. Clifford, I would give worlds to undo what you have done! to unsay what you have said! Oh, why has this terrible mistake occurred? Tell me what I have done to justify it?"

She was fairly wailing out her piteous words, and he saw there was something yet to come.

"Tell me," he returned huskily; "whatever it is, I want to know."

But she seemed to disregard his words; she walked up and down the little room in restless distress.

"How did I know you thought I was Miss De Lorme? Everybody called me Isabel. John Clifford, I am Mrs. De Lorme! Why didn't you know it?"

There was smothered fierceness in her voice as she abruptly proclaimed it.

He stood several seconds stricken dumb with the news. Then wearily, as if unto death he was tired, he went up to her.

"Forgive me—I meant no harm. God is my judge of that. And *you, Mrs.* De Lorme, if you will mercifully forget it, I—I will try."

He bowed and left her to herself. He went to the quiet of his room, where he paced the floor all that long night, drinking to the very dregs the cup at his lips. And the next morning, when he came down, *Mrs.* De Lorme had gone.

The afternoon sun was shining all over the green meadow-land, and filtering in quivering beauty through the swaying branches of the big horse-chestnuts that shaded the kitchen at Farmlands, and John Clifford, three years older than he was the morning he set sail for Europe, lay back in the red continental rocking-chair, and looked about him as a man looks who feels glad to be at home again.

He was smiling at his fond mother, who was bustling around in restless delight.

"Glad to get home? Indeed I am, little mother; and what's more, I am going to stay here—settle down, you know, for good."

"If you'd only brought a wife home with you, John," she said.

His face clouded, then lightened.

"Bless you, mother mine, didn't you know I'd come clear from the other end of the world to marry my little Addie? How is she, mother? I am going up directly after supper."

Mrs. Clifford gave a little start.

"John! dear boy—didn't you get the letter? Why, Addie's been married this six months. My poor John!"

She came over and gently smoothed his averted head, knowing only half the unspeakable agony in his noble heart.

"Married?" he said, at length. "Who to, mother?"

"A Mr. De Lorme. It is the queerest story, dear; but our Isabel—you remember?—was a married woman, it seems, and she died shortly after she left here. Her husband boarded here the summer you went away, and he and Addie Sunderland made a match of it."

A common enough story, told in simplest, most passionless words, that Mrs. Clifford never dreamed were tearing and cruelly probing a wound that never had healed, and never would.

And to-day John Clifford raises his hat to Mrs. De Lorme as she rides past in her pony phaeton, with a hand that never has touched a woman's clinging fingers since *that night*, and his face tells no tales of his lonely life at Farmlands.

WING AND WING.

BY R. W. EASTERBROOKS.

Your strength is full and free; your wings are true;
You need not stay your flight
Till you have gained the height;
But I might faint or fall, and hinder you.

I would not have it so; and yet, my love,
The journey once begun,
I could not leave undone,
And sit me low, while you soared on above.

The world is full of hearts left desolate,
Of lines strained hard and tense,
Of weary wing and sense;
And seeing these, I ask you now to wait.

Only a little though—till I can see
Whether the old tried nest,
Or whether thy loving breast
Is the safer and the better home for me.

If I were sure of keeping wing with you,
I could not say you "Nay,"
For the nest is old and gray;
The sun of late has left it for the dew.

Dear Heart, pray tell me; is your love so great
That if my wings untried,
Our eager aims denied,
You could keep back with me, content to wait?

If "Yes," our future lies together, Sweet,
My strength will strive with thine,
Thy power develop mine,
And each life in the other be complete.

If "No," then here and now we two will part,
Here in my homestead nest,
Where I may safely rest,
And watch thy victories and strife, dear Heart.

You bid me come, and I can doubt no more;
With you as guide, I dare
To cleave the untried air,
To greet the unknown life that lies before.

THE
BROADACRES TRAGEDY;
OR,
The Irrevocable Promise.

By CARLOTTA KINGSLEY,
AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF NO. 27," "FILIPPO, THE BANDIT," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.

ERNESTINE TUDOR.

> The curious questioning eye,
> That plucks the heart of every mystery.
> GRENVILLE MELLEN.

The kindness of Miss Eristoun had assigned to her guest, as waiting-maid, one of the most skillful, yet withal one of the most loquacious of all the maid-servants at Broadacres.

She had offered to relinquish in her friend's favor her own French *femme*, but Ernestine, with charming vehemence, firmly declined imposing such a sacrifice upon her hostess, declaring herself so wearied with the French tongue and manners, that to be served by a country woman would be a positive luxury.

Agatha had therefore yielded to her whim, and the morning after Ernestine's arrival there waited upon her a fresh young country girl, whose nimble fingers had already been taught the cunning tricks of the toilet, and whose uniform good-nature would be proof against the most tiresome requirements of a gay, capricious mistress.

Ernestine's first movement, after the girl was inducted into office, was to question her in a careless, nonchalant way; and the servant, needing only a little encouragement and the assurance of a listener, soon fell into a characteristic monologue, in which she revealed everything she knew about Broadacres, its former and present associations, and the various visitors and neighbors who frequented the place.

She lowered her voice to a tragic whisper when speaking of the haunted chamber, but raised it again when that subject had been fully detailed, and was proceeding to other topics, when her mistress interrupted her with the careless remark:

"And so you say there is a haunted chamber in the house. Where is it, pray? and have you seen anything strange in it yourself?"

The girl dropped the comb from her hand, and exclaimed in sincere alarm:

"Mercy, Miss! you surely can't think that I would dare set my foot in that fearful room! I'd sooner jump into the fish-pond, with weights tied to my heels—I would, indeed—rather than go near the place. I've never been in that part of the house but once, and then I was so frightened I thought I should never get away. It seemed as though my feet were both asleep, and that they'd never wake up, and in my hurry I fell down the stairs, and the other girls thought the spirits were after me. I surely thought so myself, for I'm certain I heard noises in Lady Alicia's room."

"What kind of noises?" asked Miss Tudor.

"Oh, groans and sighs, and the creaking of furniture, and sounds like that."

"When was it that you heard them, and what were you doing in that part of the house?"

"It was only about two weeks ago, Miss Tudor, and I went there because the gardener dared me to go past the door and back again in the dark. He said he'd give me a gold locket, with his picture inside, if I'd go up to that hall after nightfall, and throw my apron out of the window at the further end. I was to do this to prove to him that I'd really been there. I got as far as the door of Lady Alicia's bedroom, when I was sure I heard a noise, and I stopped to listen. Then I heard it again: a sound like a groan it certainly was, Miss; and without thinking anything more of the locket or of Sam., I turned about, threw my apron away, and ran back as fast as ever I could."

"Do all the other servants believe as you do, that the place is haunted?"

"Believe it, Miss! They know it for a fact. They all believe it, except perhaps Adkins, Mr. Manning's man."

"Is he wiser than the rest of you?"

"He pretends to be, but I believe from my very soul that if he'd been with me that night, he would have been as frightened as I was. I'd like to send him up there some dark night."

"What sort of a looking man is this Adkins?"

The girl described him in her way as well as she was able, and while she was doing so, Ernestine remembered that she had seen a servant answering the girl's description, descending the staircase at the lower end of the same hall upon which her own chamber opened.

"Where is this haunted chamber situated? How do you get at it, Janet?"

"Easily enough, Miss. The stairs in the hall yonder lead up to it, but you have to go through a long gallery first, and across what used to be an upper ball-room."

"I fancy this incredulous Adkins you speak of has been playing some tricks upon you, to see what ninnies he could make of you all."

"Indeed he's not, Miss. Adkins is not one of the joking kind. He never laughs with the rest of us. He is stuck up and proud, like all the servants who come over fresh from England with their own masters and mistresses; and more than that, he's been wonderfully sober since Mr. Manning went away, and the strange gentleman was murdered down by the gate; and it's since that time that I tried to go up there. I believe that it's Lady Alicia's own ghost that walks around, and if she could speak she could tell us something about that murder, for there have been a great many more noises lately than were ever heard before, and it is only since that time that lights have been seen at the window."

"So the spirits are astir at night, and use lamps and candles, do they?" said the young lady, laughing good-humoredly at the girl's credulity.

"I've seen them myself, Miss. I went down to the stable last night on purpose to watch for them. You can see the windows of the haunted chamber better from the stable than from anywhere else, for the trees are not so thick down there, and as sure as I live, Miss Tudor, I did see a light shine between the chinks of the shutters."

"'Twas the moon, without doubt."

"It couldn't have been the moon, for it was as dark as pitch, and it had been raining all the evening. Sam., one other girl and me watched the window till past ten o'clock, and then the light seemed to be put out; at any rate, we didn't see it again."

"And that proves that it couldn't have been lighted by spirits, for you know they never begin their operations before midnight."

"They say that Lady Alicia never seemed to sleep, but that she was just as queer and strange when the sun was shining, as she was in the darkest night."

Miss Tudor said no more, for at this moment a light tap came upon the door, and in response to her invitation, it was opened by Agatha, who came to wish her guest an affectionate good-morning.

"Come, Tina," she said, laying her fresh cheek against the equally fair feature of her friend, "hasten your toilet this morning, for I am fearfully impatient to show you around Broadacres. There are some delightful drives in the park, and I ordered a pony phaeton from town last week, which I wish you to try with me for the first time this morning."

"I shall be ready in half an instant more," replied her companion; and springing from her seat before the mirror, she bent her head while Janet threw over it a beautiful morning dress of light India muslin.

With nimble fingers, talking rapidly and vivaciously the while, she fastened at her throat a snowy cambric collar, and shaking a fine perfumed handkerchief from its folds, she fastened it in her belt, and announced herself ready to descend to the breakfast room.

Arm in arm they went down the broad staircase, talking gayly of old scenes, and of the present day's enjoyment, but all the while in Ernestine's mind there were ulterior projects which she did not for a moment forget.

"Agatha," she said, "I have been wonderfully amused this morning by the chatter of that funny little maid you have given me. Do you know, she is full of old time superstitions, and with the boldest possible face she invests your delightful, home-like mansion with supernatural interest. She stoutly declares that there is one chamber in an upper story which is haunted."

Agatha laughed and replied:

"Yes; is it not strange that people will cling to such absurd tales? I've tried my best to disabuse the servants' minds of that foolish fancy, but I find I might as well talk to the north wind. It vexes me sometimes to think they will be superstitious, but of late I have come to the conclusion that they enjoy the delusion, and I shall not trouble myself hereafter to disturb their belief."

"Neither would I. There's something pleasantly horrible, after all, in ghost stories, and I must confess I have always liked to hear them. I should have been ready for breakfast some time ago if I had not lingered, in dressing, to question Janet about Lady Alicia's chamber."

"If the poor Lady Alicia could have known in her youth that her memory would be treasured in such a ghostly way, I fancy her reason would have deserted her some years before it did," said Agatha.

"She was related to you, was she not?" asked Ernestine.

"Yes; it is through her that the relationship exists between Cousin Walter and myself. He is the direct descendant of the son whose loss drove Aunt Alicia wild with grief. Her husband became estranged from her during an official residence in Paris, where his gay life completely changed his nature, and he not only conceived a violent dislike to his beautiful wife, but, to cause her all possible grief and annoyance, he stole from her her only child—a son. Upon his deathbed he repented of his course, and wished to repair his errors. Aunt Alicia died, however, before she knew of this change, and the son—a noble youth, I am told, who inherited all his mother's good qualities, and none of his father's characteristics—was raised by other relatives. All connection between the families ceased for a generation or more, when, several years ago, my father discovered some papers in Aunt Alicia's room which caused him to make immediate search for her descendants. He then discovered that her last lineal representative was Walter Manning, the cousin to whom I am betrothed; but the small patrimony which his great-grandfather left, after his Parisian debts were paid, amounted to so small a sum that his son and grandson were forced to make personal efforts to maintain themselves, and it thus happens that I am to wed a man whose coffers are not filled with silver and gold, but, to use one of poor papa's favorite expressions, his head and his heart are filled with true riches."

"Upon my word, Aggie, your story has the spice of true romance."

"Do you think so? Then perhaps you would be interested in this ring which papa found with the papers in the 'haunted chamber,' years and years after her death."

Agatha slipped from her finger a gold ring of curious workmanship, and passed it across the table to her friend.

It was of the yellowest gold, and in it were set several pearls of unusual size and brilliancy. There was an inscription within it in quaint characters, but in a language which Ernestine did not understand.

"How interesting!" she exclaimed, as she held the ring admiringly in her hand, and turned it about to let the light fall more fully upon the clear, uncut pearls. "Who knows but that this ring, with its curious inscription, may be a romance of itself. Do you never feel impatient to decipher this motto?"

"I certainly do. I hoped Cousin Walter would be able to help me, but, to my great disappointment, I found that he was as totally ignorant of it as I was myself, though, to confess the truth, I used a little strategy, and did not tell him where the ring was found. I wished to see if the sight of it would recall any family associations or traditions, for it is evidently an heir-loom of some kind."

"And didn't he recognize it in any manner?"

"No; he took it as carelessly as he would any ordinary ring, and after examining it an instant, handed it back with the regret that he could not gratify my curiosity regarding the inscription. I was so disappointed to be thus baffled that I did not tell him where the ring was found, and that it rightfully belonged to him, but slipped it back upon my finger, intending to keep that part of the story a secret until after we are married, when among his old family papers or letters I may be able to find a clue to its meaning which he has overlooked."

After a pause of some moments, the volatile Ernestine exclaimed:

"Do you know, Aggie, I am greatly tempted to investigate this haunted chamber mystery myself? What would you say if some dark night I should tap at your door and invite you to accompany me to that ghostly haunt?"

"I should say that I had once just such a fancy; but that since the servants prefer believing all those foolish stories, I have no desire to encounter dust and horrid cobwebs for nothing, in the vain hope of disenchanting them. But if you would like to make the visit, I will furnish you with a lamp, a linen sheet, that you may appear *en costume* among the ghostly guests in Aunt Alice's room, and a parting benediction."

"Well, I warn you that I shall venture it some time," replied Ernestine gayly; and rising from the table, the two young ladies separated for a few moments to prepare themselves for the drive in the park.

The mind of Ernestine Tudor was all that day filled with the remembrance of what she had heard concerning the chamber in the distant part of the mansion, and several other circumstances having occurred during the day to quicken her perceptions, and to make her more than ever anxious to penetrate the mystery which hung about Broadacres, she resolved that lack of courage should not prevent her making a bold effort to solve it.

Twilight had no sooner fallen, therefore, than, pleading a headache, she retired to her own apartment for the night, with the intention of planning in quiet what course she should adopt to put her plan into execution.

There was no cowardice in her composition. Real or imaginary ghosts, saints or sinners, had no terrors for her; her only fear was that she might be too precipitate in her movements, and defeat the very purpose she wished to further.

Chance, however, came to her aid at an opportune juncture, for while she stood beside the window musing, she perceived the man Adkins, mounted upon a steady roadster, gallop down the avenue and out of the gates.

"There goes the only obstacle I feared would oppose me," she said, and stealing cautiously to the door, she opened it and looked out into the corridor.

It was quite deserted, for Mrs. Masterton and Agatha had driven over to a neighboring estate, to make an informal visit of inquiry on a sick acquaintance, and the servants, Ernestine well knew, were engaged in a different part of the house at that hour; so without further delay she left her chamber, and locking the door upon the outside, to give the impression that she was within and asleep, she put the key in her pocket, and noiselessly and swiftly ran up the staircase at the other end of the corridor.

There was still sufficient daylight remaining for her to distinctly see her way. The high windows with which the upper corridor was flanked, and which opened toward the west, admitted the departing rays of the sun to play upon the wall and floor, and by their light Ernestine did not fail to discover abundant traces of the desuetude into which the superstition of the servants had allowed that part of the mansion to fall.

The portion of the building where she now found herself had originally been built in a style not inferior to the other parts of the mansion, but when the house was altered and modernized, this gallery and the rooms opening from it were suffered to remain in their original state; so that now, by comparison with the apartments below, they looked ancient, weird, and with the associations connected with them, even ghostly.

Dust and cobwebs had also collected upon the floor, the furniture, and the windows, and Miss Tudor, gathering up her light evening dress, called to mind her friend's dainty objection of the morning, and for a moment she applauded her judgment.

But it was only for a moment that she thought of these things, for, burning now with impatience to complete her investigations, she hurried on to the door of the Lady Alicia's chamber.

She knew where to find it, for during the day she had adroitly managed to obtain a precise description of its location.

She now left the gallery, and was traversing the long unvisited ball-room, where the light was almost too dim for her to perceive surrounding objects.

The tall, heavily carved chairs, and the cushioned forms ranged along the sides of the spacious room, indeed gave a ghostly aspect to the place, but without stopping to consider them, the intrepid girl pressed on, and unhesitatingly laid her hand upon the door which opened into the ill-reputed chamber she had come to visit.

As she did so, she perceived that around the edges, where it joined the casing, there was a line of light, and the words of Janet in the morning occurred to her memory now with the first fluttering of alarm.

"What if I should be intruding upon the privacy of some sentient, active mortal?" she thought. "My entrance would at the least seem most unaccountable. However, I am well armed with a woman's weapons, tact and persistence, so I will enter without further ado."

With this reflection she turned the knob boldly, and flung the door wide open.

CHAPTER XI.

LADY ALICIA'S GHOST.

> What form is that?
> Why have they laid him there?
> MATURIN'S BERTRAM.

Ernestine Tudor stood upon the threshold of the haunted chamber, but for some seconds she had not the power to advance a step.

Disbelieving, of course, the marvellous stories which she had heard regarding the occupant of the room, she attributed the various sights and sounds the servants had observed to the agency of some human being, and a suspicion lurked in her mind that the absent Walter Manning might have secretly returned to Broadacres, and taken up his abode in the Lady Alicia's apartments.

But she was startled into a momentary belief in the ghostly stories she had heard when her eye fell upon the interior of the chamber, for the first object which met her gaze was a form stretched upon the high, tapestried bed, whose pale countenance, closed eyes and parted lips assuredly startled her into the belief that she beheld an apparition from another world.

The chamber was arranged in precisely the same manner as during the lifetime of its unfortunate mistress, save that now, by a second glance, Ernestine observed that there were some few signs of a more recent occupancy.

The furniture, originally rich, was now faded, warped, and in some places worm-eaten. The portraits hanging upon the walls—all likenesses of persons of a by-gone age—had the appearance of having been sad witnesses of preternatural rights and ceremonies, and the dim light which was shed by the feeble rays of a lamp near the centre of the room strongly assisted the illusion.

Ernestine's first glance fell upon the figure upon the bed; from that she turned rapidly to survey the apartment, and then, crossing the threshold with determination, she directed a second look of inquiry toward the couch.

She felt her courage greatly revived when she noticed, standing beside the bed, a little stand, upon which were placed several vials, glasses and other articles usually found beside the couch of an invalid.

She closed the door softly, and cautiously advanced to the centre of the room. Lifting the lamp from the table, she raised it so that its rays fell directly upon the pale face upon the pillow. She regarded it for some moments with the most intense interest.

Her first discovery was that it was no ghostly figure upon which she looked, though the emaciated form, pale face, and the deep slumber, might well at first have deceived her.

She beheld a young man, apparently not over five and twenty, whose countenance when in health might have been remarkable for its manly beauty, but which now, enervated and whitened by suffering, had acquired the delicacy of an Antinous.

She studied his features attentively, and noted the regular breathing with an interest to which her fears had at first given rise, for the sleeper seemed so little like a living being that, if not already dead, Ernestine feared she had come hither to witness the last moments of a fellow-mortal.

She replaced the lamp upon the table, and having now in a degree satisfied her curiosity respecting the chamber, was about retiring as noiselessly as she had entered, leaving further investigations to a future occasion, when the invalid opened his eyes and fixed them upon her with a calm, steady gaze which, to her excited fancy, seemed almost fearful.

"Are you the young lady whom I met on the road at midnight so long ago?" was the question which at length issued from his lips.

Was it the caprice of her nature or the cruelty of fate which caused Ernestine Tudor to bow her head in acknowledgment, and take a step nearer the bed that she might search still deeper into the mystery before her?

The question which the invalid had asked perplexed her for a moment; but an instant after she recalled to mind the recital of her friend Agatha concerning the meeting with a stranger at the gate, and she now resolved to cautiously follow up the clue which his question had afforded her.

"Has Adkins told you of my being here?" was the next question. "I've begged him to do so many times, but he has always angrily refused."

"No, I have known nothing of it," replied the young lady; "but I suspected all was not right, so I came hither to investigate for myself. But how came you here? Who are you, and what has reduced you to such a pitiable state of weakness?"

The invalid turned his head wearily upon the pillow.

"Adkins will tell you all about it," he said. "But for him I should have died, for that villain Man—"

He did not finish the sentence, for the door opened at that moment, and Ernestine looking around, saw the man Adkins standing within the room, and looking at her with angry alarm.

But Ernestine Tudor had sufficient tact at command to aid her. She directed a calm look of superiority, and yet of condemnation, toward the man, and said blandly:

"So it seems, Adkins, that you have held the key to this mystery all the while."

The man's alarm instantly increased.

"I hope you won't make any unfair use of what you have found out, Miss," he said. "If you'll promise to keep it secret, I'll tell all about it."

Ernestine was only too glad to purchase the information she desired at the nominal price of silence. Having received her ready assurance of secrecy, the man came nearer, and Miss Tudor, having dropped into a chair, he said in a low tone, and with succinct narrative:

"I found the young gentleman near the creek on the night of the supposed murder, covered with wounds and insensible. I did not dare tell any one of my discovery, so I brought him here quietly until he recovered his consciousness and his wounds began to heal."

"Is that all you have to tell me?"

"It is, Miss."

"No, it is not," said the young lady decisively. "You have much besides which you dare not reveal, but you need have no fear of my divulging it. You are Mr. Manning's man, are you not?"

"Yes, Miss."

"And this young gentleman has little reason to think any too kindly of your master, I fancy."

She fixed her eyes on the man's face, and its expression confirmed her own suspicions.

She arose, and going to the side of the bed, extended her hand to the invalid with kindness, and said:

"I must leave you now, but rest assured that I shall not forget you. If it is imperative that your presence here should be kept secret, there are many little comforts which I can furnish you to relieve the tedium of a sick-room. But would you not prefer being removed to a lower, more comfortable apartment?"

"No, no, Ma'am; not on any account!" exclaimed Adkins. "Pray, Miss, do not propose such a thing. His being here at all must be kept a profound secret, and that is why I have chosen this chamber for him."

"Very well, have your own way about it," replied the young lady. "You have, doubtless, most excellent reasons for the precaution."

She was about withdrawing, when the young man raised his hand to detain her.

"Tell me something of Miss Eristoun," he said, in almost beseeching accents. "Adkins tells me of but little that passes below stairs, yet even from him I have learned that her marriage has not yet been solemnized. Did you obtain for me the interview you promised?"

Again Ernestine was at a loss how to reply, but remembering soon that Agatha, in her assumed character of friend, had promised the stranger to secure for him an interview with Miss Eristoun upon the morning following their interview, she replied:

"I did; and she was waiting to receive you when the dreadful news reached her ears that you had been assassinated."

"And how did she receive the news? Did it grieve her that the companion of her childhood, the lover of her youth, the husband her father had chosen for her, had come to an untimely end upon her very threshold?"

"Is his mind wandering?" whispered Ernestine aside to Adkins.

Her words were softly spoken, yet the quick ear of the invalid caught them, and his excitement increasing, he raised himself from his pillow.

"Would to Heaven my mind *was* wandering!" he exclaimed, "and then the doubts, the anxieties and the fears I have endured for the past long fortnight were in reality the phantoms of disease! You must not—you shall not go, until you have replied to my questions, for from yonder statue I can gain nothing to quiet the torment of my soul. His kindness is misguided, and he does not understand that I am harassed by fears and a suspense which is killing me by inches. You told me upon that nearly fatal night that Agatha Eristoun was to be married the next day to her cousin, Walter Manning. Has she yet discovered that she has been made the victim of a heartless imposture, and that she believes her cousin is a villain of the blackest dye, who did not scruple to attempt murder to accomplish his designs?"

"How could she know all this, with no one to tell her, and with so many proofs of her cousin's identity?"

"The Evil One has aided him in this instance, as in many others," replied the young man. "Does not her heart tell her that this dark, swarthy man is not the true Walter Manning? Did her father die before he could tell her that by some blind or malicious caprice of fate, the name of Walter Manning is borne by two persons—one a fiend in human shape, who has taken a fearful oath that he will be avenged upon the family of Eristoun, and the other a friend indeed, who would shield the last representative of that family from all harm, even with the last drop of his blood?"

Light suddenly broke over the mind of Ernestine Tudor in broad flashes of intelligence.

"And are you the true Walter Manning, whose place has been usurped by your designing namesake?"

"I am," was the steady reply, "and I wait only for the slow healing of these accursed wounds to prove my claim to the name, and to Agatha Eristoun's hand. You promised to intercede in my behalf once, and now let me sue for your aid again. Go to Agatha; tell her that a gross fraud is being perpetrated upon her; tell her that she is upon the brink of a fatal precipice, and that she *must* heed your warning."

The young man had possessed himself of Ernestine's hand, and in his excitement he wrung it with such frenzied fervor and appeal that she cried out with pain.

Adkins stepped forward and said, with respectful solicitude:

"You are doing yourself great harm, sir, Your wounds will unclose unless you instantly quiet yourself. You have already twice opened them by your impatience to be well, and I warn you that the third time will be fatal. I'm sure the young lady herself will see the necessity of being quiet."

"I assuredly do," she replied. "Follow the admonitions of your nurse," she added, "and I will do all I can for you."

She did not wait for further words, but, glad of an opportunity of leaving the room, that she might have an opportunity for reflection, she turned from the bedside and quitted the chamber.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—To be vain of what you have learned is the same as to plume yourself on a piece of game you have received from a hunter.

THE MEDICINE CHEST.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"Going to move again!" cried I despairingly. "That makes three times this year; and three days I've cribbed out of my business to lift trunks and pack bandboxes and bully long-suffering cartmen in her behalf. Mother, I don't think I can stand it any longer."

It was a dismal, rainy night out doors, with the driving sleet tinkling against the closed casements, and the gutters streaming like miniature rivers; and somehow the heat was all taken out of the ruddy shine of the sea-coal fire by the unexpected tidings that grandmother was going to move.

"Oh, Theodore, dear, don't say anything rash," pleaded my mother. "Remember she's worth a good deal of money, and if you and Annie are married next month, perhaps she may do something handsome for you."

I sat down and rubbed my chilled hands together.

"I wish the old ogress would be so obliging as to die!" said I. "How old is she? Seventy-seven? I don't see what business people have to live so long."

My mother laughed. Grandmother Ormisted, be it remembered, was an ancestress on the paternal side of the house, and moreover, Grandmother Ormisted was probably the most disagreeable old woman that ever existed. But toads, they say—though natural history fails to carry out the assertion—have precious jewels in their heads, and Grandmother Ormisted had money of her own.

"I suppose I must go, then," I said despairingly. "But I'll smash some of her bandboxes and paper parcels, see if I don't. And if I could only bribe the hackman to upset her in the gutter—"

But just then Cissy, the little colored girl, brought in my tea and toast, and the question of Grandmother Ormisted was adjourned to some future time.

I went early the next morning to Pengrove Square, the last abiding place of my capricious-minded foremother, who might have been a very Arab, so far as wandering habits were concerned.

There she sat drinking chocolate on the apex of a pyramidal heap of trunks, boxes, parcels and cages, with a tremendous structure of black crape that she called a bonnet perched on the top of her head, her spectacles on one side, and a good deal of gray hair escaping from under her red false front.

"Good-morning, ma'am," said I, wincing a little at the sight.

"That cartman hasn't come yet," said my grandmother. "I knew he wouldn't come when he engaged. Cartmen always disappoint me. Get me another one, Theodore; and mind, I *won't* pay more than two dollars a load. Every one tries to impose upon a lone woman, but I won't stand it."

The horrors of that misty, drizzly morning will ever remain daguerreotyped upon my soul. The altercations between my grandmother and her landlady; the hand to hand combat between cartman number one, who arrived just too late for the job, and cartman number two, who considered that the only equitable method of settling the little difference was by rolling up his coat sleeves and dancing round the two trucks with doubled fists and belligerent hoots and cries; the wreck of stair carpets, and the crash of china statuettes—I honestly believe that one week of such days would have sent me to an idiot asylum. And the worst of it all was that my grandmother insisted on riding with the cartman herself.

"'Tan't usual, mem," said that individual.

"I don't care whether it is or not!" barked out my grandmother. "How am I to know where you are taking my things? Theodore, you can sit on the square trunk behind. And be sure you look out for that morocco medicine chest; it's got all those cough mixtures and restoratives in it!"

"But, ma'am—" I remonstrated.

"Either do as I tell you, or stay at home!" cried my grandmother, as she scrambled up beside the Jehu; and away we jolted over the pavements, like a travelling caravansery.

Here was a nice position for a young man who belonged to a club, and knew a lot of fashionable fellows. Riding on a furniture truck, with one arm round a parrot's cage, and a great yellow bandbox studded with crimson roses on my lap! I could almost have wished, in my despair, that the Russ pavement would open and swallow me up.

"Theodore," cried my grandmother, "there's a young man a noddin' to you. I wonder if it an't somebody we could hire to help with the things? Young man! I say, young man!"

Mr. Fitzalan—the Fitzalans of Madison Avenue—stared. I signalled to the cartman to drive on as fast as he could, and pretended to look the other way. But at that very instant the medicine chest, an oblong, leather-covered instrument of torture, slipped from its moorings and fell, striking a sharp angle against my nose, and descending with almost human malice on my pet corn.

Nature is nature, and I don't pretend to be supernatural. The piled up agony of the moment was too acute to be borne. I had been dosed from that medicine chest many a time, as a helpless little boy; I had lugged it around, as a man, until every angle had acquired a fearful significance. Nor is it too much to say that I *hated* that medicine chest.

And now this final aggravation was the last hair that broke the camel's back. I set my teeth tightly together, and grasping the offending leathern parallelogram, flung it desperately into the gutter.

"There'll be at least one less trial in the world," I muttered, as I saw it shattered into pieces, and gradually floating, like some wrecked vessel, down the muddy stream.

We reached Andover street, No. 333, and there recommenced the tumult, until each and every individual article was stowed away in its right place. It was nearly dusk when my grandmother at last sat down, and took a pinch of snuff out of a much battered tortoise-shell box.

"Well, well," said she, "we've done a pretty good day's work, thanks to you, Theodore. But I don't ask you to work for me for nothing."

I looked expectant, but ventured no reply, knowing too well how capricious and fitful my elderly relative could be when she chose.

"You are to be married this fall," said she, tapping her spectacle case on the snuff-box lid.

"Yes, grandmother."

"Young folks can't live on nothing."

"No, grandmother."

"So I don't mind giving you now what I had intended to leave in my will."

"*Now*, grandmother?"

"Yes; to-day, if you wish—this very hour; for I've left most of my money to the St. Alonzo Hospital. It isn't much; but then two thousand dollars is *something*."

"Yes, certainly," I gasped.

"You took good care of the medicine chest?"

"I—yes, grandmother," I faltered, wondering what on earth that had to do with it.

"Because your money was put in between the top lid and the paper lining—four five-hundred-dollar bills. I put it there myself last night, for safe-keeping."

And my grandmother chuckled aloud at the thought of her own wisdom.

"Go and get the medicine chest, Theodore, my boy," said she.

Like one walking in a hideous dream, I rose and staggered out into the entry, while a vision rose up before my mental eye of the dismembered medicine chest swimming down the gutters, holding to its greedy heart the while the treasures that should have been mine. No need to talk of the depravity of inanimate things now. Had not the wretched implement preserved its malice to the bitter end!

I did not go back. I have not seen my grandmother since. I only know that she accuses me of having stolen the medicine chest. I wish I had. She is going to move again next week, but I am not elected to assist. And the wedding is indefinitely postponed.

That's all!

DOOMED.

BY ALICE STARR.

The ocean waves tossed high and wild,
Uprising to the lowering sky,
While echoing o'er the billows dark,
The storm-god pealed his mightiest cry.

And, as I walked beside the shore,
I saw a wreck far out at sea;
While, as I stood in horror wrapt,
The waves their burden brought to me,

And laid it gently at my feet;
I saw it by the lightning's glare—
A *woman's* form, of slender mould,
And flowing tresses brightly fair.

And see! close nestled to her breast,
As if to shield from every harm,
A tiny baby lies at rest,
With smiling face of holy calm.

The waxen features palely gleam
From out the woman's sweeping hair;
The little breast is snowy white,
As if an angel nestled there.

Its little face is closely laid
Against the mother's ice-cold breast,
And, folded in her fond embrace,
Infant and mother are at rest.

* * * * * *

The cruel waves may come and go,
But while the storm-god rules the main,
A sadder sight than this to-day
They never will reveal again.

THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS.

A FAIRY TALE.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

There was once upon a time a king whose queen presented him with just one child—a daughter. When she came into the world he was the happiest king in all creation. He caused the joy bells to ring all over his realm, and ordered his subjects who were in the confectionery line to deal out to every child who applied for it, a pound of sugar-plums gratis, and charge the bills to him.

The baby was the most beautiful little creature ever born. Everybody said so, and everybody must be right. And when the christening day was come, they gave her the name of Altogether Beautiful, because there really was no other name suitable.

The fairy godmother was, of course, at the christening feast, but she looked very much discontented, and was very sulky. The king felt troubled by this, and asked her politely what she was so good as to be displeased at, for one must not tread on the corns of fairy godmothers. The old lady replied snappishly:

"Enough is the matter, young man. If you weren't the greatest ninny of a king that ever sat on a throne, you'd know. That girl of yours is altogether too beautiful. She'll be so vain there will be no bearing her, in the first place; and all the young men will run away with her, in the second. You'll have a nice time with her. Why didn't a moderately good looking girl content you?"

"How can *I* help it?" asked the king. "Perhaps, as you are a fairy, you'll tell me how. Shall I break her nose, or put her where she'll catch the small-pox? People are generally congratulated when their girls are nice looking."

"I'm your best friend, as you'll find," said the godmother; "take my advice, and all may be well yet. Never let her see a looking-glass, and never let her see a young man. Teach her that she is very plain, and that young men are too dreadful to be mentioned, and she may be a credit to you yet."

With which words the fairy godmother vanished up the chimney, leaving the queen and all the good company, including several excellent fairies, in floods of tears.

"Oh! oh! oh!" said every sensible woman present. "The good old fairy godmother is right. Beauty *is* a snare. Young men *are* dangerous. It's a dreadful thing to be beautiful, as we all know by experience."

The king, however, being a practical man, who acted while others wept, went to work. He banished every looking-glass from the palace, to the great disgust of all the ladies of honor, who never could put their things on straight afterward. He discharged every young male servant, and forbade any one to admit a young man within the gates.

As soon as the young princess could read, she was taught several things: first, that she was very plain; secondly, that it was a virtue to be plain; thirdly, that handsome was that handsome did; fourthly, that young men were dreadful creatures, who must not be spoken of or to, and that if by chance a young princess met one, she was to scream until some one came to drive him away.

So she was brought up. The king, the queen and the fairy godmother all doing their best to hide her beauty from her. She never read anything romantic, or heard a sentimental song. When she rode out, it was in the garden, with the ugliest old man that was ever born on the coach box, and all seemed to go on excellently.

Thus she attained her sixteenth year, a pattern to all womankind, who had never looked into a looking-glass, and never seen a beau.

"Next year," said the king, "I will marry her to the most respectable elderly king who has lost his queen, whom we can meet, and we will have done our duty by her."

Suddenly, however, to their great surprise and terror, their modest young princess began to be the vainest creature in the world. She tossed her head and smiled absurdly. She refused to repeat the words, "I am very plain, and I am thankful for it," which had been printed in an especial catechism made for her own use. She threw down the book and cried:

"I won't tell lies, there now. I'm pretty. I'm as round as can be, and I'm better looking than all of you put together."

All the mirrors in the world could not have made her vainer, and the king and queen sent for the fairy godmother, and bewailed the sad case to her.

"Not a mirror in the house," said the queen. "I've put my bonnets on crooked sixteen years for her sake, and this is the end of it."

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried the old fairy. "I haven't lived five or six hundred centuries to believe that. She's got a looking-glass about her. We must search her."

And the three went to the princess' room, and what they found in her pocket was this: an old-fashioned brass door-knob, which she had polished until it looked like gold. This was her mirror!

Now every one knows that a door-knob is the most ludicrous of all reflectors. In it the most regular nose appears flat, and the most beautiful mouth meets at the back of the head. But the princess was delighted with it.

The poor king and queen could not help laughing, in the midst of their trouble.

"Don't you see how ugly you look?" said the king. "How much reason you have to be thankful that you don't possess the snare of beauty!"

"No, I don't, pa," said the princess. "I think I'm pretty, and others do too; so there. And I shouldn't be thankful if *they* didn't, and *I* wasn't either."

And she put her precious door-knob in her pocket; while the fairy godmother shrugged her shoulders and spread out her hands.

"I told you so," said she. "And I'd like to know what the girl means by *others?*"

The princess would not answer the question.

Now kings of the olden times always kept a fool—a comical creature, sometimes deformed, whose duty it was to speak his mind.

This king's fool had a hunched back, a red nose, tow-colored hair, and green eyes. He wore party-colored clothes, and a cap and bells, and was a very comical creature indeed to look at. When he wasn't wanted he lived in a little room in the palace. And between this room and that of the princess was a thick wall. However, the princess was of an inquisitive disposition, and knowing that this wall was one which separated that part of the palace in which she lived from the part she was never allowed to visit, she had bored a hole in it with her crochet needle and scissors, and peeping through, had seen the fool.

Oh, how beautiful he looked to her! She clapped her hands in delight.

"I know now what a young man is," she said, "and it's as stupid to call them all sorts of names as it is to call *me* ugly." And she looked in her door-knob with joy.

Then she called softly, and he answered.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"I'm a young man," said the fool.

"I thought so," said the princess.

"Who are you?" asked the fool.

"I'm a beautiful princess," said the princess.

"Oh, you need only say a princess," said the fool; "all king's daughters are beautiful."

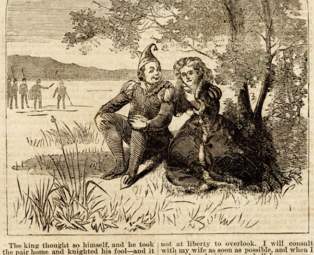
"What fibs they've been telling me!" thought the princess. "I can't tell what has come over me. My heart goes pitapat."

It was Cupid who had shot her through the needle hole in the wall. He had not been kept out sixteen years for nothing. So the princess put a postage stamp over the little hole, and nobody noticed it. And between looking at herself in the door-knob and listening to the words of the fool through the little hole, she grew so dreadfully vain that when she was found missing one morning, it really seemed scarcely worth while to go after her. But the king did his duty as a father.

She had eloped with his fool; and when they were found, they were resting in a very damp meadow, and she was looking in the door-knob and he was saying witty things.

"And what have you got to say for yourself?" asked the king.

"Only this," said the fool. "If you expected that a pretty girl could be kept from meeting with a looking-glass and a lover, you're a bigger fool than I."



The king thought so himself, and he took the pair home and knighted his fool—and it wasn't the first one either. And after that, no doubt, he kept his sharp speeches for his wife. Men generally do. And it is on record that the first long mirror the princess looked into, she took her door-knob from her pocket and tossed it scornfully away.

"Ah, papa," she said to the king, "if you'd only let me peep into that just once while I was a girl, I'd never have married a fool, for I see now that there is hardly a prince on earth any way worthy of me."

THE ILLITERATE ROBBER.

While sitting over our chocolate at Brignon's *café*, the conversation turned upon robbers and robberies in the French metropolis, when one of our number, Jules Lafont, related the following:

A gentleman who had been out late on a very dark night was returning home with a lighted lantern in his hand, and while passing over the Pont Neuf he was accosted by a stranger in a manner so polite and so supplicating that he stopped without hesitation.

"You have a light," said the stranger, "and will perhaps do me the kindness to read for me this bit of paper which I have just picked up. It may be of consequence."

The gentleman held up his lantern and looked first upon the applicant, whom he found to be a strong-built, sinewy man, heavily bearded, and very respectably dressed. Then he took the paper, and, to his amazement, read as follows:

"When you have read this, speak not a word! Speak, and you die! Give to me your watch, your jewels, and your purse! Do this, and then silently depart, and you may live.—Beware!"

Daring robberies had recently been committed in Paris by bold and desperate men, and the gentleman had no doubt that he had met one of the fraternity. He had no weapon of defence with him, and not caring to jeopardize his life, he concluded it most prudent to follow the directions thus silently given, and accordingly he took out his watch and his purse, and removed his rings and his bosom-pin, and delivered them up, at the same time taking another careful survey of the stranger's face, so that he might recognize him should he ever after meet him. Having done this without opposition, he made his way over the bridge as rapidly as possible.

A week, or more, had elapsed, when, one day, as the gentleman was standing upon the *Quai de la Conference*, he observed his robber friend of the Pont Neuf passing near at hand. Keeping the man in sight until he could call in the aid of the police he had him arrested and taken before a magistrate, and upon full representation by the gentleman of all the circumstances, and upon direct accusation of the robbery, he was sent to prison. When the robber was brought to the bar for trial he picked his teeth and stroked his beard very unconcernedly; and in answer to the indictment he pleaded not guilty *most assuredly*. The gentleman, who was the only witness of the fact against the prisoner, swore positively to the robbery, and the identity of the person.

The prisoner made his own defence; and he did it with an ease and assurance to be found only in the most accomplished of his class.

"My lords and gentlemen," he said, "I confess that on the evening specified I did meet this gentleman on the Pont Neuf; and the scene, as he has related it, transpired between us. But, *ciel!* I had no evil thought. It is my misfortune not to be able to read. I had just picked up a bit of paper, and thinking it might be of importance, and seeing that the gentleman had a lighted lantern in his hand, I asked him to read it for me. I would have asked him what he had found, but before I could speak he pulled out his purse and his watch, and thrust them into my hands, and also forced upon me his finger rings and diamond pin. I was astounded. I thought him mad—perhaps he meant to jump from the parapet into the river,—suicide.—Was it the paper had caused this?—Had it been meant for him?—I was upon the point of questioning him when he turned and dashed away, leaving me, for the time, like one stupefied. When I recovered myself the thought flashed upon me that the paper might be of great value,—some state secret, perhaps,—and the stranger, wishing to keep it without question, had given me his valuables to get rid of me. *Ma foi!* I think it is I who have a right to complain. I would like justice for the useless excitement I have suffered."

Not a soul in court but believed the rascal was guilty; but no formal demand upon the gentleman for his money had been proved, and the man who could not read, but who could plead with the grace of a Foquét, was suffered to go free.

S. C., JR.

BLOUNT AND THATCHER.

Among the many happy answers returned to the challenge to mortal combat, we know of none more worthy of remembrance than that made by Judge Thatcher, of Massachusetts, to Hon. Thomas Blount, of North Carolina. It was in 1797, and the gentlemen were members of the National Congress, then in session in Philadelphia. Mr. Blount had introduced a resolution on the subject of "Defensive Measures," in which occurred a phrase to which Mr. Thatcher objected on the ground that it was *French*. He would have the resolution worded in plain "American" language. Mr. Blount denounced the objection as trifling and puerile, and as "one which any *gentleman* ought to be ashamed to make." Mr. Thatcher rejoined that he did not often say anything of which he was ashamed, and closed his remarks by repeating the old adage—"A guilty conscience needs no accuser."

Mr. Blount arose in a passion, and said he "would take from no man, with impunity, such language as that." By stern demand from the chair order was restored in the House; but the affair was not so to end. Mr. Blount sent a challenge, and Judge Thatcher's answer thereto afforded a vast deal of merriment to the members at the expense of the challenger, at the same time quashing the affair beyond the power of mistaken chivalry to revive it. Said the Judge,—

"I am a husband and a father, and my family have an interest in my life which I am not at liberty to overlook. I will consult with my wife as soon as possible, and when I receive her decision you shall have my answer."

C.

SCIENCE.

Astronomers have sometimes seen spots move across the face of the sun much more rapidly than the ordinary solar spots. They are described as round, black, and sharply defined. One was observed in Germany in 1819, one in France in 1859, and one in England in 1862. Mr. J.R. Hind conjectures that this may be an unknown planet which exists at no great distance from the sun, and from these previous observations he has calculated that if it is such a planet, it will be visible on the sun's disc on the 24th of March next. He therefore recommends that it be closely watched for on that day by astronomers in all parts of the world, in order to settle the question whether we have yet "brought into harness" all the interior planets that exist.

The system of heating buildings by means of hot air is not a modern invention, as generally supposed. It was practised in Germany more than nine centuries ago, as is shown by recent excavations in the ruins of the ancient Kaiserhaus at Goslar, in the Hartz mountains, where the workmen discovered an extensive series of horizontal flues leading from a large central fire-vault. A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* says that it is quite clear what their purpose must have been, as no other means of warming the structure are visible. The kings of Franconia, from the time of Conrad I., in the year 911, lived in this palace.

Captain Richard F. Burton, the African traveller, thinks that the great Lualaba river, discovered by Livingstone, flows westward into the Congo, instead of northward into the Nile. He thinks that an expedition should start from the coast of West Africa early next year, penetrate the Congo regions, and meet the great explorer on his way down the river. "He will traverse a country," says Burton, "where no roads have been opened to strangers, amidst a numerous and warlike population. I was shown a straight sword from the Upper Congo which impressed me strongly as regards the civilization of the inner races."

Russia depends almost wholly upon wood for fuel, and serious anxiety is felt at the rapidity with which the forests are being swept off in some of the provinces. On the banks of the river Volga coal has been searched for in vain; and the price of wood for building and burning has almost doubled since 1865. A quarry has been found, however, in the province of Samara, which yields a combustible mineral containing a large proportion of inflammable gas, and it is proposed to compel the use of this as a substitute for wood, so far as practicable.

The Royal Society of Edinburgh has a committee on bowlders which is engaged in ascertaining the locality and characteristics of every important bowlder in Scotland over twenty tons in weight, with a view to their preservation. It is much to be regretted that the immense Washington bowlder near North Conway, New Hampshire, should have been blasted away as it has been; and some effort of the kind attempted in Scotland seems requisite to prevent the recurrence of similar acts of vandalism in other parts of our country.

The population of the globe is usually estimated at one thousand millions. A new and careful estimate based on the very latest returns has just been published at Gotha by two competent German statisticians, Drs. Wagner and Behm; and they calculate the present number of the earth's inhabitants at thirteen hundred and seventy-seven millions of souls, which is probably the nearest attainable approximation to the truth.

Silver mining in Greece is again talked of. It is said that Pericles built the Parthenon, probably the most costly, as it certainly was the most beautiful building of Athens, out of the profits derived from the silver mines on the promontory of Laurium, near the city. These mines have been reopened; they yield lead containing about ten ounces of silver to the ton.

One of the highest authorities on all subjects connected with dye-stuffs and artificial colors is Professor Chevreul, the French chemist. In a recent paper on the stability of dyes he mentions, that while the blue colors obtained from indigo are permanent, those from Prussian blue will not resist the action of soap, though equally unaffected by light and air.

The preparation of alcohol from sawdust is described by M. Zetterlund, in *Le Moniteur Scientifique Quesneville*. He first boiled the sawdust with hydrochloric acid. This gave him grape sugar. He then allowed the saccharine liquor to ferment, and finally distilled it, obtaining about six gallons of alcohol from nine hundred weight of sawdust.

Father Secchi, the Roman astronomer, writes to the Paris Academy of Sciences that a daylight aurora was visible in Rome on the 15th of August, from ten o'clock until mid-day. It will be remembered that there was an animated controversy among observers, last year, as to whether the aurora was ever seen in the daytime or not.

On Deserta Grande, the smallest of the Madeira islands, is found a large species of spider, known as *Lycosa ingens*, which is capable of making a meal of a lizard three inches long. So says Mr. F. Pollock, in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History.*

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

De V. (S——, N. Y.) thus complains: "I too am in trouble. After reading your Notices to Correspondents for at least eight years, I find myself suing for your kind advice. My case I shall try and state as briefly as possible. For two years I have kept steady company with Miss A. Last February I 'broke off,' because I imagined and heard many groundless reports, as 'Miss A and De V are engaged,' etc., when indeed we were not, for I had never until then thought of marrying. So seeing that people would talk, I stopped my attentions toward her. About this time I met a Miss B, who was visiting in this city. When she returned home I corresponded with her, and soon after I left here to travel in the West. While away I heard that Miss A was to be married this fall. I also received many interesting letters from Miss B, and soon thought that I loved her. When I returned east, I stopped for several days in her native place, and while there saw much of her—Miss B. I told her of my love, and she just adores me. Arriving in S——, I found that Miss A was not engaged, and my great love for her, which I considered dead, has all returned. She loves me more, if that is possible, than Miss B. I have promised to marry Miss B, and I shall keep my word unless some kind fate intervenes, although I do not love her as dearly as I do Miss A. I cannot marry in three years. What shall I do? Wait for something to happen, or frankly tell Miss B 'not that I love her less, but I love Miss A better?' Please answer, although you may think this nonsense; yet your advice, like Cicero's, is much read and sought after." Cicero, we think, would say, "Thou art unworthy of the name of Roman. Know thyself, young man, before winning the love of young girls who cannot have much penetration, since one gives thee the adoration due only to the gods, and the other does more, if possible. Young man! thine is a case for delay. Let things alone; three years must elapse before any decisive step is to be taken, and kind fortune will probably do something in that time to deliver three not overwise persons from their difficulties. Meantime, young man, make no more protestations to one girl, while honorably bound to marry another." Cicero hath spoken.

Inquirer (Charleston, S. C.) says: "Having been a constant reader of your valuable and widely circulated paper for the past four years, and having implicit confidence in your sound judgment, I take the liberty to solicit your opinion upon the following subject, through the *Ledger*. I am intimately acquainted with a young lady who is engaged to be married to a Mr. W——. The engagement has been pending for a considerable time—reasons to me unknown. More recently the lady was introduced to a Mr. C——, who, after being in company with the lady, became infatuated with her sweet charms, and determined to win her affections, if possible. I think his efforts have been rewarded by his gaining that which he so much desired. She, it appears, loves the latter as well as the former, but does not wish to break the heart of either. My advice has been solicited. But not feeling sufficiently competent to give advice upon such a subject, I appeal to you for that which has been asked of me. I hope that my solicitation may meet your favorable approval." A woman cannot lawfully marry a man who is one of two equally beloved by her as suitors. She had better disclose the facts to the gentleman to whom she is engaged, and seek to be released. Unfaithfulness to him has, in point of fact, begun, and whatever her future career may be, she is all too likely to suffer in some way for her want of constancy. This is as far as we can see, because it does not appear from your letter that No. 2 is prepared to marry the lady he has won from No. 1, and whom he is likely to distrust on very slender grounds; for what security has he against a No. 3?

H. C. W. (Pittsburg, Pa.) says: "Being a devoted and attached friend of the *Ledger*, I come to you for advice, through your 'Notices to Correspondents,' which, if granted, will be thankfully received. I am a young man eighteen years of age. I was left an orphan at the age of twelve, and since then, up to the present time, have had to get along the best way I could. I have always had a great desire to obtain at least a common English education, but having had a younger brother left entirely dependent upon me, it has been almost impossible for me to make any advancement. I have kept my brother at school for the past three or four years, where he has obtained quite a good common-school education, and now has a situation in the hardware business, where, by the kind assistance of friends, he is enabled to support himself. Now that I have time and can better spare the means, I wish to devote my evenings and other spare time to my personal interests. What I wish to know is this: what course would you advise me to pursue? and do you think, by diligent application to books in the evening, I could accomplish my end? By answering this at your earliest convenience you will greatly oblige." There is no real difficulty in your way. Attend a good evening school, or if there be none accessible to you, engage a competent teacher to give you an hour or more in the evening. You have done well to your brother, and are likely to do well for yourself.

Earle (New York) says: "Will you please give me the benefit of your advice in this matter? I am nineteen. Three years ago, while spending the summer in the country, I became acquainted with a young gentleman whom I liked very much. When I left for home he requested me to write, and also asked for a picture, promising to send one of his in return. Soon after my arrival home I received a letter from him, which I answered. This was the beginning of a correspondence which lasted about a year. At the end of that period letters from him came few and far between, until at last my letters remained entirely unanswered. Under this slight I became angry, and wrote, requesting either an answer or a return of the letters. To this he replied, stating that he did not wish to give up the correspondence. This letter I answered soon after its receipt, and although eight months have elapsed since, I have not heard from him. Now, Mr. Editor, what would be proper for me to do under these circumstances? Please excuse the length of this epistle, for it is the first one of the kind I have ever written. If you will kindly answer my question you will oblige." Self-respect forbids you to do more than write a peremptory note, requiring the return of your letters, if you think them of any importance, and closing all connection with a man who cannot be believed.

Lena says: "Having been a constant reader of your valuable paper for five years, I now wish your advice upon a certain subject that has been troubling me for some time. I have for nearly a year been receiving the apparently serious attentions of a young gentleman of excellent standing. About three months ago he suddenly ceased his visits. His reasons for such treatment I do not know. I love him better than life, but still I am too independent to make any advances to win him back. We are constantly being thrown together in society, which of course is very trying to both. Please tell me what to do in this case, to win him back without making him think less of me. I have sufficient reason to believe he once cared something for me, but since this coolness, I scarcely know what to think. Please advise me." We advise you just to "do" nothing. You cannot go and fling yourself at his feet in the way male lovers are supposed to act, though they never do, and exclaim, "Lord of my wounded heart, come back! Oh, return to thy sorrowing, broken-hearted Lena!" If he is anything worth, he will come back, unless he has found good reason for withdrawing; and if he has, nothing would be gained by your going on your knees to him, metaphorically.

A Ledger Reader (Boston, Mass.) says: "I have heard lightning-rod salesmen explain the science and nature of electricity, as they term it. Now what course shall I pursue, to understand it as well as they do, or pretend to? By answering the above in your 'Notices to Correspondents,' you will oblige. It may never be of any particular benefit to me, but I have a great desire to know all about it." We give it up. We have no means of knowing their real knowledge. Whenever *you* want real knowledge on the subject, take a walk out to Cambridge, inquire for the professor in Harvard who has electricity in his department, tell him that being a Boston man, you despise shams and pretences, and ask him to direct you to the best work on electricity, and then set yourself to master it, which, being a Boston man, you will readily do; you will then find yourself equal to the smartest of the salesmen, and may even whip them with their own rod.

W. H. D. (St. Louis, Mo.) says: "Please inform me as to whose translation of Danté is considered the most perfect; also if 'The Vision of Danté' and 'Danté's Inferno' are the same; also where copies of the same may be had." The question of the best translation of Danté is hardly settled. You will find Cary's good and accessible. He was (Cary) assistant librarian in the British Museum and a clergyman, and his translation received the high approbation of Coleridge. Danté called his poem *The Commedia*, having regard to its simple style; admiring posterity prefixed "divine." Mr. Cary, finding in some editions the title "The Vision," and thinking it more in harmony with English modes of speech, adopted it. The poem contains three parts, Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. "The Inferno" is only another name for the first. Boyd, Wright, Cayley, Carlyle and Pollock have also translated Danté into English.

R. T. C. (Providence, R. I.) says: "I have been a constant reader of your valuable paper for four years, and have been much interested in your answers to correspondents. I would be much pleased if you would answer the following questions: Where can I obtain a correct history of the Council of Nice? Did Constantine, Emperor of Rome, decide by his vote that the Bible should be called the word of God, and Jesus Christ the Son of God? Your decision will end a controversy, and oblige a sincere friend and admirer of your paper." Of course any good church history—like Mosheim's—will give you the history of the Nicene Council. The particular point regarding which you desire information is discussed in the "History of Christian Doctrine," by Dr. W. G. F. Shedd, Vol. I., Book III., published by Scribner, New York.

M. J. J. & Co. (New York) say: "A weekly reader of yours would be much obliged if you would give your opinion on the following question, through your correspondents' column. Has a foreigner the right to commence and carry on a business in the city of New York, say in the way of selling commodities not of his own manufacture?" There is no difficulty in the way of a non-citizen trading. His difficulties begin when he desires to convey real estate.

W. E. T. (Louisville) says: "The dispatches from Boston to-day contain this paragraph: 'The *Journal* gives a full list of individual losses, and estimates the total at considerably over one hundred million.' Several young men in this city are desirous of knowing whether you think million or millions should have been used." Like most of the business men of America, we go for "millions."

Curiosity (New York) inquires: "Would you please inform me through your correspondents' column whether A. T. Stewart was confirmed by the Senate of the United States for the office of Secretary of the Treasury, when appointed by President Grant in 1869? By so doing you will greatly oblige." We believe not.

Ida May (Dubuque.)—The name San Joaquin is pronounced *San Ho-ah-keen*, when one wants to be precise. It is generally pronounced *San Whah-keen*, and this is frequently still further reduced to San *Wah-keen*. In every case the accent is on the last syllable.

T. M. (Manchester, Va,) says: "I have crossed the Atlantic ocean twice, and each time I was treated more like a beast than a human being, because I was not a cabin passenger, or did not pay twice for a steerage passage, as some poor people have to do, or suffer the greatest insults and abuses. I often said to myself, when observing the treatment that the cabin passengers received from their waiters, 'Oh, why is this distinction of human beings? for a poor man has his feelings of right and wrong as well as the rich man!' I do not mean to say that a steerage passenger is entitled to all the comforts that a cabin passenger is entitled to, but I do mean to say that he has a right to be treated with as much civility as a wealthy man. Steerage passengers do not get what their contract with the ship-owners entitles them to, and what they do get is dealt out to them as if they were so many paupers or convicts. For instance, at meal times they are deprived of their proper allowance of food; and oh, how those waiters attend their tables, which are situated, I might say, in a place not fit for a dog kennel. If a man asks for fresh bread instead of biscuit for breakfast, and insists on having it, he is told to go to the barrels and get biscuit, and if not, to hold his tongue, or he will get none at all. What I am anxious to know is, if the companies of such steamers could be punished by the laws of the United States for not fulfilling their agreement." Yes, they could be punished, if the violation of their agreement could be proved. But there is the difficulty. Who will take the trouble to prove the violation of the contract? You say that you were wronged, and treated more like a beast than a human being, each time you crossed the Atlantic. Will *you* take the trouble to prosecute the company in whose vessels you sailed? It would probably take two years to bring them to trial, and of course you could not afford the time. So it is in every case, and hence the impunity with which such wrongs are perpetrated.

Dexter (not THE Dexter) is anxious on the following points: "Please inform me through your most valuable paper whether it is necessary or not for anybody getting married to have any friends or parties as witnesses. 2d. How much do you think ought to be given to the minister as a marriage fee? By answering the above, you will greatly oblige." There must be two witnesses to a marriage. It is of no importance who they are—your friends or members of the minister's family. 2d. In order to enable us to reply to your second query, we ought to know your means, social standing, expectations, and the fortune of the lady; also whether the marriage is to be "in church," or in the minister's parlor. We mention this last element, because when in church, organist and sexton have to be paid, and can talk, and the minister will not, and so the fee that should and would have been his, is diffused over three, and so the over-estimated income of ministers from this source is being cut down. You are also to take into account what other relations the minister has sustained to you. He may have preached long to you; for example, ever since he baptized you; may have soothed the departure of previous partners of your life; may have given you much-needed good advice, and never had any outward and visible sign of your inward and real gratitude. Now is your time to show it. We cannot go nearer the mark than by laying down these "general principles," unless we saw your bank book. There are so few ministers over-rich, the chances are against your erring by excess.

Synn (Missouri) says: "There are two young ladies about the same age. One is what is termed a would-be flirt, and is anxious to receive the attentions of just as many gentlemen as possible. Her father is wealthy. She dresses in the height of the fashion, and is admired by a great many, her disposition being pleasant, and she being willing to talk to as many as may come to see her; but she is not smart, and never seems to care about reading, or anything else than looking nice and pretty. The other lady is not so pretty, but has a pleasant countenance, is intelligent, and tries to live and learn, and does not seem to care for more than one person's attentions at a time. She is pleasant, and talks enough, though none too much. Her parents are not wealthy, consequently she does not dress so finely. Now, which of these would be the best suited to one who is depending on picking up some little cash with his wife? With the first one a person could get ten thousand dollars; with the latter nothing." There is no sense in your question as you ask it. It amounts to simply this: To a man who wishes to pick up money, which is preferable, ten thousand dollars, or nothing? Probably you meant to ask which young lady you had better marry; but if you cannot pop a question to one of them more intelligently than you have put this to us, we do not believe either of them will have you.

G. G. (Baltimore) writes: "I am twenty years old, and have been waiting on a young lady for two years, who is two years younger than myself. All this time there have been no words of love exchanged between us; but from the first time I saw her, I felt as if I should always love her, and think to-day that I was not mistaken. It was very hard work for me at first to keep company with her, but I succeeded, after a number of trials, in getting her consent, and now I think she would rather dislike to have me stop. But what I want to ask you is this: She is going away to school in the spring, for a year certainly, if not longer. Don't you think before she goes I had better tell her just how I feel, and ask her if when she gets back we both feel so inclined, to renew our acquaintance? Her folks think that she is too young now to receive the attention of any one, but do not care if I escort her home evenings whenever we meet. I do not feel as though I could give her up. Please tell me what to do, for I know you will advise me right. I have a good position, and by another year will get good pay, which will increase every year." You seem to be getting on very well, with a good prospect before you. Certainly you might as well tell the young lady—what she already knows, undoubtedly.

Zeta (Baltimore) writes: "About three years ago I made the acquaintance of a young lady of this place, and was in her company for about one month. She then went away, and I saw no more of her for about one year. I then saw her in the company of a young man. I would have spoken, but she turned away her head, and on looking back I saw she was doing the same thing. Since then she has done the same thing a number of times. Last Sunday I was going by her house, on the other side of the street, when she called me by name. I turned around, and she had closed the shutters. I have noticed that the young man does not go with her so frequently as before, but the cause I do not know. Now what do you think of the case?" It seems that whichever way the young lady turns her head it turns your head all the same. After the lady had called you by name, we do not see that it amounted to anything for her to close the shutters. She probably supposed that if you came in you would come by the door, and not through the window. You might as well pay her a visit, and ask her if she would be willing to be called by the same name as she called you—with a Mrs. before it.

Juanita says: "I wish to ask your advice on an important subject. I am eighteen years old, and am engaged to a young man who loves me devotedly. Since I have become engaged, I have met another young man whom I find I love equally as well as the one I am engaged to, and who also loves me. I know it is wrong to encourage both, but sometimes I think I love the one I am engaged to, and again at times I think I love the other better. Now please tell me what is right and proper for me to do, as my future happiness is greatly involved. Please answer as soon as possible." As a general rule, it is not wise to become engaged at so early an age. You are paying the penalty of deciding that you knew another well enough to commit your life to him, before you knew yourself. If you can disentangle yourself from your engagement, you will do well to remain as you are for three years, by which time, it may be hoped, you will have reached a decision on which you can yourself rely.

Jefferson (Chattanooga, Tenn.) says: "I have been for over seven years a constant reader of your invaluable paper, and have never yet asked you a question. I hope you will answer this one. When and where was Edward Everett born, and when and where did he die? By answering, you will greatly oblige." Edward Everett, who was one of the most versatile, accomplished, and industrious scholars ever America produced, was born in 1794, in Dorchester, near Boston, entered Harvard at eighteen, and graduated in 1811. He died January 15, 1865. Mr. Everett is known to our readers not only by his splendid general services to the public, but by his Mount Vernon papers, running over a year, 1859, and by his subsequent articles contributed to this paper, for which he continued to write regularly, up to the close of his life.

A Normal School-Girl (Boston) says: "I have the greatest propensity for teasing young men and flirting; I often neglect my lessons for the purpose of indulging in this kind of sport. My sister tells me it is wrong, but I do not see any harm in it. Now, what I wish to know is, do *you* think it wrong?" You had better not neglect your lessons, and your flirting is very likely to have a bitter ending some day. You will find that you have become deeply interested in some young man whom you thought yourself only "teasing," while he, in fact, was only flirting with you. This is the sharp lesson you are probably destined to learn, however you may neglect all others.

Duluth writes: "About one year ago I got acquainted with a young man. He has visited me constantly and often, and sent me flowers and books. We were to be married this next Christmas; but a few days ago I was introduced to a young lady just arrived in town. She says she has been engaged to this same gentleman for more than a year, and has been corresponding with him all this time, she being ignorant of the fact of his going with another. Now, what am I to do?" Confront the young man with the information you have received and the young lady. You may be misinformed. If you are not, you certainly don't want such a husband, and whoever gets him will get a bad one.

F. and H. write: "One evening we called at a neighbor's house, and there met a young gentleman with whom we were intimately acquainted. He asked for our company home. We accepted, but had gone but a short distance when we met our own beaux, with whom we were keeping company. Was it proper for us to go home with them, or with the one we first accepted?" It would have been proper and polite for you to have continued your walk home in company with all three.

E. T. says: "I am in love with a young lady. She has fallen in love with another, but says I still have a share in her affections. I asked her to become my wife. She replied, 'It is raining now; wait till there is pleasant weather.'" Tell her the love of a woman is something which does not admit of partnership. As to its raining, tell her if it keeps on it may rain husbands, but you will not be among them. Then quit, and try your luck elsewhere.

Milliner inquires: "Is it improper for a lady to ask a gentleman friend to give her a Christmas present, if she is not engaged to him?" It would be indelicate, even if she were engaged.

C. H. L. (Providence) says: "I am desirous of knowing which the *great* Patti is. Whether it is Adelina or Carlotta?" Adelina.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*